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DÉJÀ-VU

by Marc-Alex Vézina



Maybe it's just a vague impression, but do you sometime have the feeling that you've already seen the brand new anime being shown before your eyes?

It happened to me when we played our just-arrived MS Gundam F-91 tape. As time went by, I had the impression of knowing what was going on minutes in advance. This is usually unlikely with new material, don't you think? Once the movie was over, our collective sigh was "oh well, this is MS Gundam all over again..."

The same feeling occurred with Macross II, though thankfully much less in intensity. This is not to say that they aren't good: they're still high grade animations. The problem is, there are few new concepts. This may be fine for newcomers to animation fandom, people who have not seen the older, original anime, but I (and other "old" fans) am not satisfied with just improved reruns.

At least they could give us new characters. While it's okay to star a young mecha pilot, does he always have to be the son/nephew of the engineer in charge of the mecha project? Why is he always the goddam best pilot in the whole world? It is a good thing some animes still step out of these clichés.

* * *

Speaking of change, we've been fumbling around with a new concept for the magazine. From issue number 7 (February 1993), Mecha-Press will be about the same size as Protoculture Addicts. The reasons for this are numerous:

- keeping printing and shipping costs under control;
- standardization with our other products;
- and finally, because of readers' demands and suggestions.

While Mecha-Press will be a bit smaller, it will be thicker than ever! This means you will get as many articles and pictures as before, and often, more than before. We also want to upgrade the visual presentation by putting in more pictures.

We believe that we're right on the mark this time. The magazine will only improve itself with time: more and more articles and pictures. We're also looking at the possibility of adding a full-color section (like four or eight pages) with great artwork and color pictures of mecha, spaceship and figure models.

Why don't you write to us, and tell us what you think about our new format before we actually commit to the deed? After all, this is your magazine...

Marc-Alexandre Vézina

Marc-Alexandre Vézina

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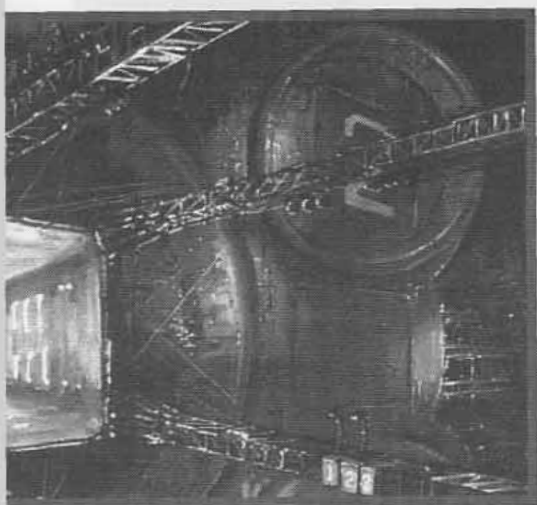
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WHAT'S GUNDAM FORMULA 91

by Martin Ouellette



GUNDAM F91 is the most recent movie of the GUNDAM saga. Its arrival was announced in the last third of 1990 and it was the most awaited-for Japanese animation project of the beginning of the 90's (that's before we discovered that MACROSS II was coming!). Marking the return of Yoshiyuki Tomino as director and script writer, F91 was the logical continuation of the early GUNDAM plot, composed of GUNDAM MS, ZETA GUNDAM, DOUBLE-ZETA GUNDAM, and NU GUNDAM: CHAR'S COUNTERATTACK.

GUNDAM 0080: WAR IN THE POCKET and GUNDAM 0083: STARDUST MEMORIES are not part of this chronology and are an entity of their own (they were done by a team of young animators, who simply have made another GUNDAM that would be more to their taste). We can see the difference between the two timelines if we compare their respective backgrounds. In Tomino's background, the Newtype concept is pushed to the limit (sometimes a little too much!) while in 0080 and 0083, the Newtypes and their usual companions, the psycommu weapons, are nearly never mentioned.

GUNDAM F91 is set in U.C. 0123, 30 years after the last "Lond Bell vs Neo-Zeon" battle in NU GUNDAM: CHAR'S COUNTERATTACK. That means that Tomino has left himself a 30 year space to work with if he wants to do a follow-up to CHAR'S COUNTERATTACK (in case Char and Amuro are still alive!). When I talked to Tomino-San at Anime Expo '92, he told me that he was very anxious to start working on the next GUNDAM project. I have no idea of what it will be but judging by Tomino-San's smile, it promises to be real interesting. Since he's just finished with GAIA GEAR (a radio show which was also published in small installments in NEWTYPE magazine), I suppose that the next GUNDAM will have some of its flavour.

If we look closely at F91's story, it is more or less of a rebirth for GUNDAM. Check this: a brand new type of extremely powerful Mobile Suit, piloted by an inexperienced young guy who's scared out of his wits but fights like a lion to defend his home and loved ones. The enemy is a not so evil organization (only its leaders are evil, as it is often the case in real life!) with a suitably fascist inspired name, a blond and good looking ace (who looks and acts like Char Aznable) and sharp looking Mobile Suits (the Feds suits always looked like cans compared to the Zeon's). If this isn't a new GUNDAM MS, I don't know what is! The new GUNDAM universe is set; how Tomino-San will continue it is anybody's guess!

WONDERFEST '92

by Martin Ouellette

While we were at Anime Expo '92, we learned that our friend Jeffrey Tom (from New Type Hobbies and Toys) was going to Japan for the 1992 edition of the Wonder Festival, which is considered to be "the" garage kit convention. Organized by Kaiyodo, one of the principal garage kit companies in Japan, it was an event worth seeing, even if it was rather short with only one day of exposition (August 16).

Although still quite big, the event was smaller than the other years' mainly because General Products, the usual organizer, wasn't present. As a lot of model fanatics in the anime world know, GP closed its doors about a year ago. It seems that the recession has started to hurt the garage kit industry, because the latest info we have announces that Zero (a very good company) has been forced to close too. But many others still exist and showed up for the event. The main participants were (in no particular order): Wave, Toys Press, Workshop Cast, Kotobukiya, Musashiya, Max Factory, Realize, G-port, and of course Kaiyodo. Two major garage kit companies were noted for their absence, however. It seems that Volks (who makes the superb Five Star Stories models) and B-Club (maker of the stunning 1/220 scale Gundam models) decided to save their energy for Jaf-Con '92.

All the companies present had at least one new kit to present to the public, and more often than not a bunch of them! Workshop Cast showed off the three kits they have produced so far: a magnificent 1/100 scale resin Joker 3100 Knight of Gold, the ultimate kit of the Bang Doll and a superb Schpeltor (Knight of Chrome or Water Dragon). Those three kits are the best of the FSS kits available and are of the highest quality, justifying their prices.

Kotobukiya presented the 1/144 scale resin model of the YMS-16 Xamel: anyone who has seen Gundam 0083 can imagine how big it is! Note that this is the only kit of the Xamel available (but a 1/220 scale version would be neat!).

Kaiyodo displayed the AMP graviton gun from Silent Möbius (in 1/1 scale), a vinyl kit of Giant Robo and a new kit of Mazinger Z. While it's been out for quite some time, their 1/35 scale Led Mirage is still one of the best and biggest kits in existence. The labors from Hobby-Japan's "Patlabor the 3-D show" were also exposed.

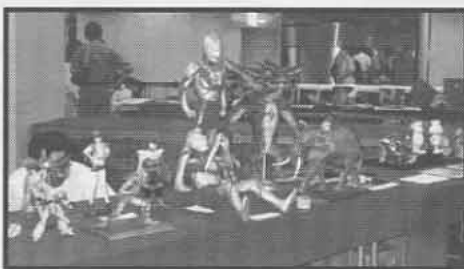
As we can see Jeffrey's trip was worth it. The chance of seeing new products plus the possibility of meeting company executives made the Wonder Fest a must. The Japanese being quite friendly, he was able to give an even better base to his numerous business relations and make sure that North American fanatics have a chance to buy their dream kits at reasonable prices.



Figures Galore!



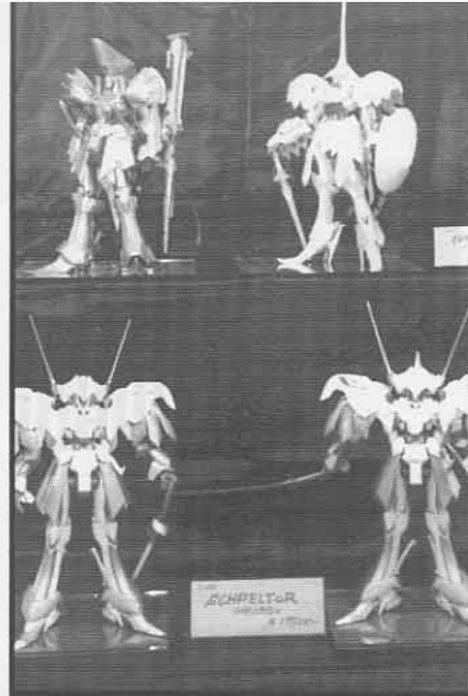
Labors and more Labors of all kinds.



Wide variety of Ultraman kits.



Ideal setup: lots of space and great light!



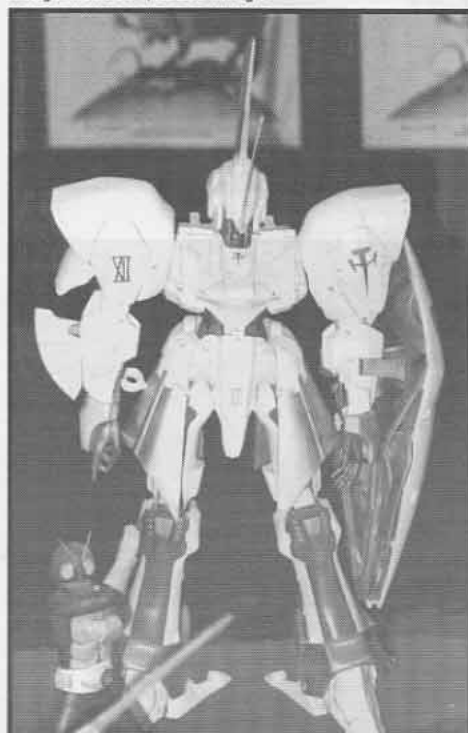
The new FSS Mortar Headds.



Godzilla couldn't miss this show.



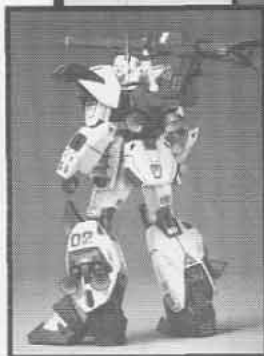
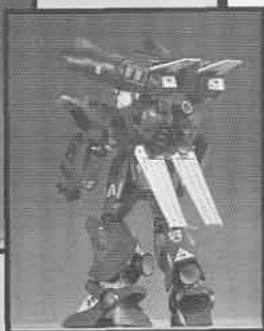
A huge monster: 1/35 Led Mirage.



NEW KITS FROM BANDAI

Bandai has just released three new plastic kits from the serie Gundam 0123: Silhouette Formula. In addition to the RGM-111 Hardygun and RXF-91, the mobile suits now available are the RX-99 Neo-Gundam, the XM-07G Vigna-Zhira and the F-71B G-Cannon Magna. Except for the Neo-Gundam, all the suits are reworked versions of the F-91 models with many added features.

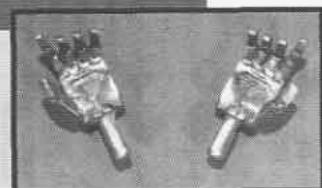
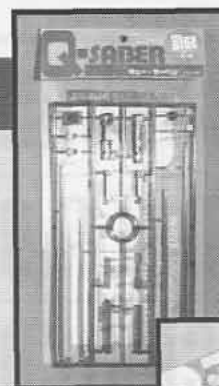
Silhouette Formula 0123 models, manufactured by Bandai, plastic model kits, 1/100 scale.



ACCESSORIES PACKS

Now available at New Type Hobbies and Toys are accessories packs for Sci-Fi models. New Type carries lenses, ball joints, rubber joints, thrusters, sole pieces and metal detail parts such as hands (square, rounded, or articulated plastic). Also check out the new "clear" packs; each contains many beam sabers and detail parts. Several grades of rubber and metallic tubings can be ordered in standard packages. Please call for details.

Accessories packs, various manufacturers, available at New Type Hobbies and Toys (see ad in this issue).



MEKTON TECHNICAL MANUAL

The newest in a growing line of books for the acclaimed Mekton II game system is fresh out of the oven. The Mekton Tech System (MTS) is a collection of "add-on" rules that will enable the players and the gamemasters to recreate almost any mecha from their favorite anime. And not just mecha, but any kind of hi-tech prop!

Don't throw out your Mekton manual because all the stuff presented in the Techbook is fully compatible with all the rules published before by R. Talsorian Games. Any mech from previous campaigns can be updated, or used as is!

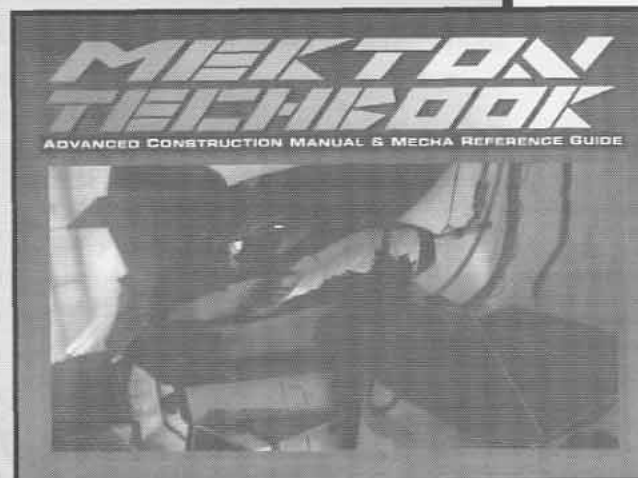
Here is a brief list of what you will find inside:

- electronic warfare package;
- ESPer lenses for psi combat;
- grav propulsion;
- maneuver verniers;
- sentient, AI and organic mechas;
- refined basic systems (powerplant, sensors, etc);
- advanced transformables;
- remote drones;
- and last but far from least, a complete system for custom-building weapons of any kind!

That's right, you can now choose the very effect of the guns, missiles and other equipments on your mech. From hundreds of micro-missiles to a planet busting beam cannon, everything goes, but you'd better watch that CP cost...

The Techbook also contains a complete guide for 17 of the more common mektons used in the Kargan-Elaran wars. Designed by the Waltrip brothers, the mektons have a sleek mechanical look that is guaranteed to please the gamers. In addition to the gaming stats, a full historical overview along with variations and famous pilots' names is included for each mekton.

Mekton Techbook: advanced construction and mecha reference guide, published by R. Talsorian Games, soft cover, 96 pages.



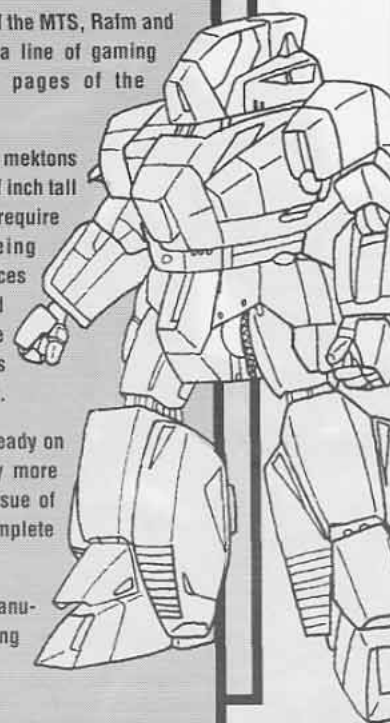
MEKTON MINIATURES

Following in the wake of the MTS, Raftm and R. Talsorian presents a line of gaming miniatures from the pages of the Techbook.

Cast in soft metal, the mektons are about one and a half inch tall on average. They often require some assembly, being molded in several pieces for maximum details and looks. Included for some models are optional parts like shields and swords.

Several models are already on the market, with many more scheduled. See next issue of Mecha-Press for a complete review.

Mekton miniatures, manufactured by Raftm, gaming piece.



GUNDAM FORMULA 91 OVERVIEW

by Martin Ouellette

When I heard, in early 1990, that there was to be a new GUNDAM in 1991, I freaked! People all around me knew that I was a GUNDAM maniac and announced the news to me very carefully (probably because they thought I was going to blow an artery!). Nearly a year passed before I saw the incredible runner for it on a GUNDAM 0083: STARDUST MEMORIES laser disc one of our friends gave us. And boy! I was not disappointed!

I had to wait until August 1991, at Animecon '91, to be able to see this movie for the first time. It began with a big colony hatch being cut open and the entry of Crossbones Vanguard's (I was going to say Zeon) Mobile Suits into the Frontier IV colony (or is it Side IV?). At the same time, there's a big festival going on and

Cecily Fairchild (one of the principal characters) gets elected Miss Country Side. As she begins to refuse her prize (she seems to have been pressured into participating in the contest), there's a big explosion and a RGM-89R Jegan falls on a building, crushing the people inside. The Jegan returns fire on a XM-02 Den'an Gei (a Crossbones Vanguard low rank officer suit) but the C.V. machine kicks the Den'an Gei's head off. The carnage begins as the outclassed and outnumbered Federation Mobile Suits try to hold the C.V. suits back. Amidst the panic, Cecily, Seabook Arno (the future Gundam pilot) and their friends appropriate a museum exhibit MS (an old transformable Guntank) and try to help the Feds, but nothing works and everything is lost. Seeing this, the kids try to make it to a space rescue boat (it looks like a school bus to me!) Seabook's dad has secured for them. On their way there, they are attacked by a contingent of C.V. Suits led by Dorel Ronah (high rank officer of C.V. and member of the Ronah royal family). With the help of Cecily's traitorous stepfather Theo, Dorel captures her and starts to explain that she's Vera Ronah, his kid sister. Cecily remembers him and agrees to follow him without resistance.

The kids and Seabook, having escaped capture (or rather destruction, Dorel being a little rough on them), find themselves in another colony. They join the crew of the Space Ark, a Federation training ship which was on its way to deliver a brand new S.N.R.I prototype MS to the flagship Rah Gustar but had been forced to hide itself from C.V.'s MS units patrolling around Frontier IV (now renamed "New Babylonia" and under C.V.'s rule).

At the same time, Cecily is taken to see her grand-father Meitzer Ronah (the C.V.'s "King" or "Grand Duke") whom she's very glad to meet again (this is where we learn that Cecily's mother Nadia had disappeared ten years earlier, taking Cecily with her) and later, her father Korozo, who now wears an iron mask.

At first, she doesn't believe him and asks him to remove his mask to prove it. He refuses, saying that he swore not to remove it until Cosmo Babylonia had become a reality (the Cosmo Babylonia theory is nearly the same thing as the Newtype theory advocated by the Zeonists 30 years earlier).

A couple of days later, Dorel attacks the colony where the Space Ark is hidden. Seabook boards the F91 MS, now known as Gundam in honor of an old class of MS it resembles. He repels this attack and another one some days later. It is during this later attack that, as he prepares to shoot a final suit (an XM-06 Daghi Iris), two Jegans block him and tell him that the C.V. pilot is defecting to their side. The pilot, Anna Maria Broughia (who looks just like Lala Sun) seems to have defected because her boyfriend (?), a C.V. high officer named Zabiné Chareux

(who suspiciously looks like Char) has the "hots" for the new C.V. Queen, Vera Ronah). The two get away from the battle. Following a few scenes which offer some much needed explanations, Cecily re-joins the Federation.

The anxiously awaited finale happens soon after, when Korozo "Iron Mask" Ronah sends a bunch of Buzzsaw drones (an extremely silly part of the movie, believe me) which manages to waste a lot of Frontier IV's civilian population in a most gruesome way. Cecily and Seabook battle them and, finding a way to get out of the colony, try to destroy the Lafressia, Iron Mask's personal Mobile Armor. Cecily jumps him first but gets beaten back. Even worse, she is ejected from her MS and rendered unconscious. Enraged, Seabook engages Lafressia and by using a Newtype/psycommu trick, destroys it. Seabook, terrified at the thought of having lost Cecily, looks for her. After searching crazily, he finally finds her. Luckily, she's still alive and they return to the waiting Gundam.

I felt a little betrayed: a happy ending in GUNDAM! Well, times change, don't they!





ANIMATION F91

Although I felt a little betrayed by the non-Gundam standard ending (fewer main characters getting killed), I must say that the rest of the movie was quite good. The animation itself is very smooth (check the movements of the mechas - it's worth it) with beautiful colors and well-detailed backgrounds (always a must if you want my opinion; look at Miyazaki's movies!). Yoshikazu Yasuhiko designed the characters and did a wonderful job. But I have a slight complaint about one thing in particular: I'm tired of seeing the same principal characters in all Yasuhiko movies! Seabook could be named Arion, Camille, Joe, or Ken - they all look the same (with Ken particularly, if you've seen VENUS WARS, you know what I mean!). A little variation could be interesting for such an important part of the plot. The only other character I didn't like (or rather "had a problem with") is Koroza Ronah (Iron Mask). And I know for a fact that I'm not the only one.

The mechanical designs in F91 are very good. The idea of changing the Zaku design for the Den'an class mecha was an incredibly wise move because whatever you do with it, a Zak is still a Zak, so the change is rather refreshing. If you ask me to pick the best mecha design in the movie, I will definitely go for the XM-02 Den'an Gei, with the XM-04 Berga-Dallas coming a close second. The Gundam F91's design itself didn't impress me that much (looking like a toy), but seeing the RGM-89 Jegan (my favorite design in the entire GUNDAM saga) was a welcomed surprise. The worst mecha design was the Lafressia Mobile Armor. Please, I don't want to see something like this ever again. Too much is too much, even for Gundam. Keeping good, attractive designs for the Mobile Suits would be just fine.

Although I liked the music, I had that strange feeling of having heard it a long time ago. When the Crossbones Vanguard combat music started, my mind formed the image of a metallic black armored figure with a deep voice saying "What is thy bidding, my master...". I suddenly had the feeling of déjà-vu. Next time, it would be a good idea to make it less obvious. But even with all this griping, I liked the movie. I just wish it hadn't been so far-fetched.

GUNDAM FORMULA 91

TECHNOLOGY IN UC 0123

"The Jegan makes a thruster jump and lands on top of the building. Unfortunately, the roof isn't strong enough and the Suit starts to sink in. To the pilot's dismay, a C.V.'s Den'an Gei jumps at him and kicks his Jegan's head off..."

What?! Wait a minute here! The Jegan is much bigger, why is the Den'an Gei winning? Quite simple: C.V.'s Suits are much more advanced than the old Jegan which have been in service for 34 years! In U.C. 0093, the MS had reached their ultimate size limits. A simple GM (the Jegan) was 19 meters tall for a weight of nearly 50 tons! And they had to fight against Zakus (Geara Dogas) that were 20 meters high and weighted 60 tons! The Gundam of that age (RX-93 Nu Gundam) measured 22 meters high and Char Aznable's suit, the Sazabi, was 23.00 meters. But those monstrous machines had gone their ways just like the dinosaurs.

Thirty years have passed since Neo-Zeon's defeat at the hands of Lond Bell and for the Federation, those years have been peaceful and nearly serene. After the fifteen years of war (from U.C. 0078 to 0093), life had started to reorganize itself for peace. Reconstruction was one of the biggest businesses around and one of the companies had started building its own independent little colony. The Buhho recycling company was founded by Chaln Holst who, having made his fortune, had bought the family name of the Ronah's, one of the most distinguished families of old Europe. Holst, being a shrewd man decided to build a colony where his employees could live and work without being harassed by the Federals. Chaln's son, Meitzer, continued his father's work.

In his mid-thirties, Meitzer founded the Cosmo Aristocracy movement, which was nothing more than the Zeon ideology all over again. To attain his goals, a special school was established for those who would undertake military training and mechanic tests. The students of this school later became Crossbones Vanguard.

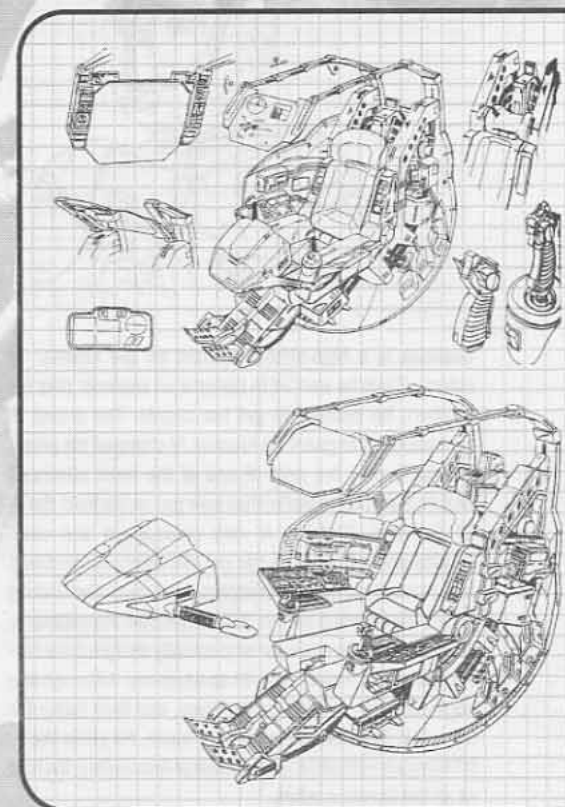
Evidently, a military outfit like C.V. needed Mobile Suits. The Buhho company, in its infancy, needed to construct their own work MS (the prices for the standard ones, as well as the fact that they were usually too big for construction work had made it so) so the Den'an class work MS was developed. Getting smaller and smaller, in U.C. 0121 they attained their optimal size: 14 meters and less than 15 tons. This suit was much smaller than the ordinary suits used by the Federation for two reasons: first, the suit's function was work so it had to be agile and small enough to fit just about anywhere; second, the quantity of raw materials to make the suits was limited. Since even C.V.'s colony was small, everything had to be miniaturized, compact and 100% efficient. The Den'an suits being very good, it was decided that they would be the base for the first military MS.

Named XM-01 Den'an Zon, it had a miniaturized fusion engine and beam generator which, although smaller than their Federation counterparts, had a nearly doubled output. Maneuverability was of concern, so the

suits were given a great number of thruster ports (nearly 90 in certain cases) and their speed was also considerably augmented. In the past, the ratio thrust/weight was usually 1.5 kg/1 kg (the Jegans used by the Federation have this ratio). The new Suits have a 3.5 to 4 kg/1 kg ratio! C.V.'s R&D department gave a special attention to the weaponry. The beam shield was developed and the heavy machine-guns were given a large place. With time, the XM line of military suits gave birth to six more MS types, XM-02 through 07.

In 0123 U.C., Meitzer Ronah decided that C.V. had waited long enough and attacked Frontier IV. The Federation tried to defend itself but their 34 years old Jegans just didn't measure up to C.V.'s new suits. The Federation had, with the RGM-109 Heavy Gun and F-71 G-Cannon, very capable, miniaturized MS as well but their pilots had never seen real combat (the Federation had been in peace for nearly two generations) and didn't know how to fight against the highly trained C.V. pilots who had in fact their backs against the wall. Having started the attack, they would not be able to retreat very far. So at the end, smaller, highly developed MS and very well trained pilots gave C.V. the victory in Frontier IV and other subsequent battles.

Only the arrival of the F91 Gundam on the battlefield saved the situation. Boasting the bio-computer technology, it was more than a match for C.V.'s machines. In short, the F91 was the best MS available. But even then, the MS developed by C.V. still had the upper hand when compared to the ones used by the Federation.



GUNDAM F91 CHARACTERS

by Martin Ouellette

SEABOOK ARNO

17 years old



Seabook is a high-school student on the Frontier IV colony. Since he wanted to become an engineer (like his mother), he decided to get his degree. The arrival of Crossbones Vanguard on Frontier IV changed his plans, and he is now the pilot of one of the most advanced Mobile Suits the Federation has ever put on the field, the F-91 Gundam. Seabook is very courageous and cool-headed under fire but he can get extremely dangerous if he's pushed too far. In that aspect, he is much like Camille Vidan, the Gundam pilot in ZETA GUNDAM. His mother is Monica Arno, the engineer who actually designed the bio-computer that makes the F-91 so advanced. Although she neglected him, his little sister Rees, and their father for her work, Seabook loves her very much. He pilots the F-91 Gundam with skills reminiscent of Amuro Rey, the first of all the Gundam pilots.

CECILY FAIRCHILD

17 years old



Although living on Frontier IV, Cecily is the daughter of Nadia and Koroza Ronah, members of the Ronah royal family. When she was ten, Cecily's mother disappeared with her, eloping with Theo Fairchild on Frontier IV. Vera's name was then changed to Cecily Fairchild. Cecily is a beautiful, strawberry-blond haired young woman, with piercing blue eyes and a very simple (yet dignified) manner. Her gentleness hides a fierce nature, though she sometimes shows bursts of rage that put her in rather bad situations (like when she engages the Lafressia giant Mobile Armor single-handedly). After she gets "abducted" by her brother Dorel, she decides to follow her destiny as a Ronah royal heir and agrees to be named "Queen of Crossbones Vanguard". But later, after seeing Seabook, she changes her mind and goes back with him to the Federation side. Cecily pilots the SM-07 Vigna-Ghina, a high-officer Crossbones Vanguard Mobile Suit made especially for her.

MONICA ARNO

44 years old



Monica is Seabook's mother. She is an engineer holding a high position at the S.N.R.I. (Space Navy Research Institute) where she developed the bio-computer, now part of the Gundam. Monica is a rather brilliant person. She based the bio-computer's circuitry diagram on a game she played when she was a kid, named "Cat's cradle" (making figures with your fingers and a string). She had to leave her family for her work, but Leslie (her husband) and Seabook do not harbor any hard feelings toward her. That is not the case with Rees, her ten-year-old daughter, who greatly resents her not being with them when they needed her the most. At the end of the movie, Monica joins the Space Ark crew to help take care of the Gundam.

REES ARNO

10 years old



Rees is Seabook's little sister. Exceptionally intelligent, she's the one who solves the problem the Space Ark engineers are experiencing with the Gundam's bio-computer circuitry by showing them the relation between the Cat's cradle game and the aforementioned circuitry. Rees is much like her father Leslie, which means calm, discreet and collected. She resents Monica (her mother) for leaving her and the rest of the family for her work. Rees is a distinguished member of the "Pioneer Kinder Club".

BERGHITO PIRIEAU

20 years old



If there's a professional posturer in the Federation, this guy is it! Show-off and brash, he never backs off from a fight, whatever the odds. He's also cynical and without pity. At one time, he even suggests that if the enemy has Newtype pilots, they should be taken care of right away. The remark by itself isn't that bad but he could at least have saved it until Cecily (who's a confirmed Newtype and just got back to the Feds side) wasn't there. Tact and diplomacy aren't his game. But yes, he's a very good pilot and he knows it. At the end of the movie, he pays for his show-off attitude when his RGM-109 Heavy-Gun GM gets dismembered and himself killed by the Buzzsaw drones sent into the Frontier IV colony.

KOROZO RONAH (IRON MASK)

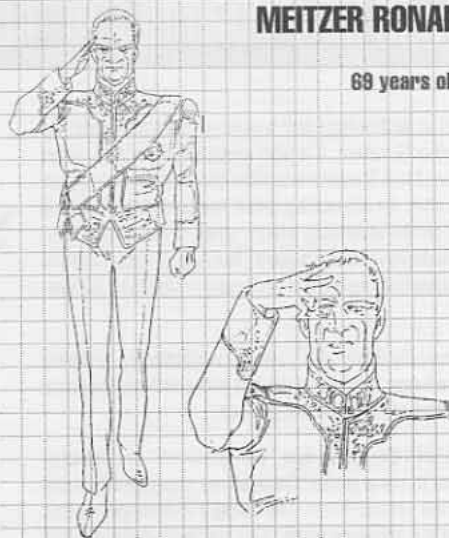
45 years old



What else can we say about this guy except that he's a new Gren Zavi. He's got all the deviousness and cruelty necessary. Gren killed his father (or at least, had him killed) and tried to kill his sister. Korozo goes a step further and tries to kill his own daughter! In reality, he's the true master of Crossbones Vanguard and his father is nothing more than a puppet. He even manages to have the Lafressia, his personal giant Mobile Armor, constructed in secret so that even Meitzer doesn't know about it. No mean feat when we know the size of the Lafressia. Its armament and size alone show how power-mad its pilot must be.

MEITZER RONAH

69 years old



The master of Crossbones Vanguard (but only in appearance) and grand-father of Cecily (Vera) and Dorel, Meitzer is a kind old man who believes in his dreams. He's the author of the "Cosmo Babylon" theory. Meitzer isn't a cruel conqueror though. He really believes in his theory and truly wants to take care of humanity. There is a very strong bond between his grand-children and himself. But all those qualities shouldn't mask the fact that he'll go to ridiculous lengths to make his dream come true, like taking on the entire Federation army with a very small (but well-trained) army at his disposition. Furthermore, he is not the real master of Crossbones Vanguard - his son Korozo (Iron Mask) is! In that aspect, Meitzer Ronah is much like Degin Zavi, the first master of the Zeon Archduchy. Meitzer is a very decorative and useful kind of puppet.

DOREL RONAH

18 years old



The older brother of Cecily (Vera) and, after Korozo's death, legitimate heir to the Ronah royal throne. He's also the commander of C.V.'s Mobile Suit forces and a very good MS pilot (if a little too cocky for his own good) in his own right. Dorel believes in his grand-father's Cosmo Babylon theory and acts accordingly with arrogance and pride! Let's just hope that he doesn't turn out like his father Korozo. Dorel pilots an XM-04 Berga-Dalas.

ZABINÉ CHAREUX

24 years old



Since 30 years have elapsed since the events of NU GUNDAM: CHAR'S COUNTERATTACK and the death of Char Aznable (at least as far as we know), then this guy cannot logically be his son if he's 24 years old! But he looks so much like Char that making this assumption is only natural. The fact that he acts like him only makes this idea more tempting. Zabiné is the leader of the Black Vanguard, an elite Mobile Suit unit which could also be called "Royal Guard". Like Char, he has many women around him that can cause some major hassles if one of them is jealous enough to try to kill him! He is what's usually called a "dream boat", even with his eye patch! At first, he pilots a black XM-05 Berga-Giros and after some damage, replaces it with a black XM-02 Den'an-Gei.

ANNAMARIA BROUGHIA

16 years old



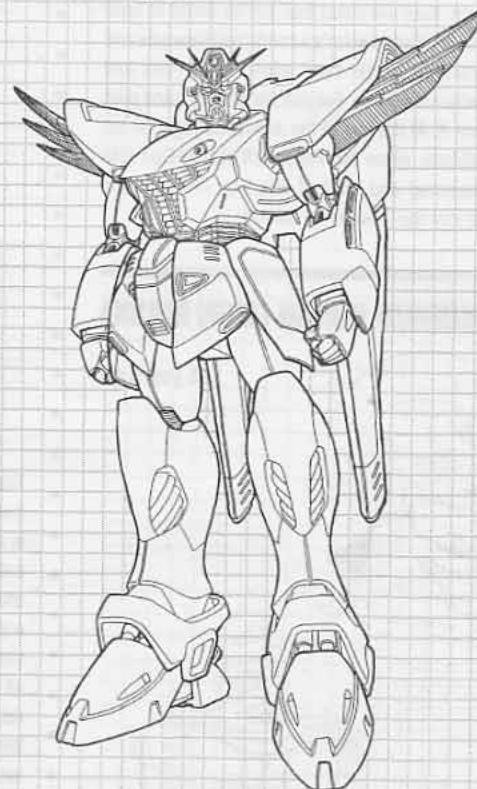
One of the superior officers of Crossbones Vanguard's scouting Mobile Suit unit, Annamaria is also an intimate (!) friend of Zabiné Chareux. But after Cecily's arrival, Zabiné loses interest in her and Annamaria, out of spite, passes to the Federation's side. In a battle, during the last third of the movie, Annamaria, at the command of her newly repainted XM-06 Daghi-Iris (it is now tan and red instead of dark green and red) engages Zabiné and gets killed in a rather messy way. Physically, Annamaria is a near clone of Lala Sun in GUNDAM MS.

GENERAL PURPOSE MS / FORMULA 91 "GUNDAM":

The F91 is much more advanced than any other MS ever built as far as technology and weaponry are concerned. Its looks is a proof of that by itself. Much more streamlined than any other Gundam, it is also much smaller and weighs a lot less. But no one should be fooled! This machine is definitely a Gundam! The antennae (the best way to distinguish a Gundam) and the two eyes are surely present, as is the famous red chin. An interesting detail: the face plate conceals a psychommu ejector (other machines have this weapon mounted on the forehead) which, when in use, makes the suit look like it's spitting! The shoulders are broad and contain three deployable flaps each. The role of those flaps is unclear (maybe they are used to draw energy from the Minovsky particles floating both in space and inside the colonies, or simply as heat sinks).

The torso contains the cockpit with a hatch that slides forward horizontally (instead of opening vertically like ordinary MS) and big radiator-like panels. The right hip plate contains a spare beam shield and the left one contains the beam sabers. The legs are long and thin, with big feet, giving the suit a good stability on the ground.

On the control systems side, the F91 is the first suit to be equipped with the brand new "bio-computer" technology. This gives it a maneuverability and command/response ratio second to none (even "Crossbones Vanguard"'s most powerful suits like the "Berga-Giros" or "Vigna-Ghina" don't stand the comparison). The cockpit is equipped with a 360° view screen (à la "Char's Counterattack"). The suit's colors are the standard white, blue, red and yellow (in this order) paint scheme used by all the Gundams that came before (except for the RX-93 Nu-Gundam). The F91 Mobile Suit is piloted by Seabook Arno, the son of bio-computer engineer Monica Arno.



Code name: Gundam F91
Official code: F-91 (Formula 91)
Use: Federal force prototype general purpose MS
Height: 15.20 meters
Weight: 7.8 tons (dry), 19.9 tons (combat)
Armor material: compound ceramics/gundarium alloy
Generator: 4 250 kW
Thrusters: 15 350 kg x4, 4 380 kg x6
Max thrust: 87 680 kg
Apogee motors: 51
Armament: 20 mm vulcan guns x2 (head), 60 mm vulcan guns x2 (torso), beam sabers x2, V.S.B.R. (Variable Speed Beam Rifle) x2, beam shield x2, one beam rifle, one beam launcher bazooka, one psychommu launcher (head/face plate).

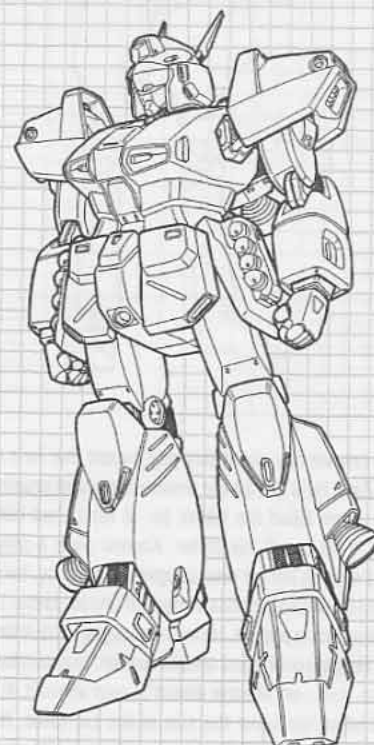


CLOSE COMBAT MS / RGM-109 "HEAVY GUN":

The GM Mobile Suit of Gundam F91, the Heavy Gun seems to be a direct descendant of the now famous RGM-89 "Jegan" (Char's Counterattack: Nu Gundam). Although a child (with its 15.80 meters) compared to the Jegan (19.00 meters), the Heavy Gun is one of the biggest MS in F91. It is also the heaviest after the Jegan (the Heavy Gun weighs 23.5 tons while the Jegan weighs 51.9 tons!). The Heavy Gun has all the particularities of the GM lineage: thin but tall with a motorcycle helmet-like head, standard weaponry, low armor protection and a shield.

The cockpit is similar to the Gundam's with its 360° view screen and deployable head-up display. A rope ladder is installed on the inside of the cockpit hatch, making the wheeled mechanical ladders of the old times obsolete. Its color is a very light cream overall with some touches of red and light orange. We see the Heavy Gun throughout the movie.

Code name: Heavy Gun
Official code: RGM-109
Use: Federal force close combat MS
Height: 15.80 meters
Weight: 9.5 tons (dry), 23.5 tons (combat)
Armor material: gundarium alloy
Generator: 2 870 kW
Thrusters: 21 250 kg x2, 16 790 kg x2, 9 940 kg x4
Max thrust: 115 840 kg
Apogee motors: 59
Armament: 20 mm vulcan guns x2 (head), four grenade racks x2, one beam saber, one beam rifle, one shield.



MS F71 "G-CANNON":

Although small (14.30 meters), the G-Cannon is one of the most heavily armed MS the Federation has ever put on the field after the Gundams (of course). The F71 when seen from a distance looks like the Heavy Gun but if observed closely, the differences are evident. The head is smaller, the shoulders are different with three maneuvering thrusters on each of them. Since the F71 is more squat than the Heavy Gun, its waist is thicker and upper body wider. The legs are strongly built (in order to sustain the weight and vibrations of the machine-cannons) with a 16 790 kg thruster on each of the ankles. The back-pack is also bigger and more powerful than the Heavy Gun's.

The colors are identical to the Heavy Gun: a light cream overall with some touches of red and dark grey. The G-Cannon isn't seen very often but makes quite a lot of noise when it appears. A version without the machine-cannons exists but we don't see it in the movie.

Code name: G-Cannon

Official code: F-71

Use: Federal force middle distance support MS

Height: 14.30 meters

Weight: 8.7 tons (dry), 23.1 tons (combat)

Armor material: compound ceramics/gundarium alloy

Generator: 3 350 kW

Thrusters: 27 840 kg x2, 16 790 kg x2

Max thrust: 89 290 kg

Apogee motors: 50

Armament: 20 mm vulcan guns x2 (head), four barrel mega-machine cannons x2 (shoulder mounted), dual beam guns x2 (forearm) beam sabers x2, one beam rifle, one shield.



GENERAL PURPOSE MS RGM-89 JEGAN (REFINED):

The Jegan is the MS with the longest service record (34 years) in the Federation. It was put into service in 0089 U.C. and fought alongside Amuro Rey's RX-93 Nu-Gundam as Lord Bell's standard MS against the Neo-Zeon (under the command of Char Aznable) in 0093 U.C.. In the early U.C. 0100's, the suit had to undergo a total refit. Better armor was installed, thruster power was nearly tripled and the weaponry augmented, so that the Jegan could stand up to the more modern suits. The version we most often see in the movie is the normal type.

The Jegan keeps the colors that first distinguished it from the other GMS that came before: a very light green overall with some touches of dark-blue, grey and red. We see the Jegan during the entire movie (usually getting blown away).

Code name: Jegan

Official code: RGM-89 (refined normal type)

Use: Federal force general purpose MS

Height: 19.00 meters

Weight: 23.1 tons (dry), 51.9 tons (combat)

Armor material: compound ceramics/titanium alloy

Generator: 2 730 kW

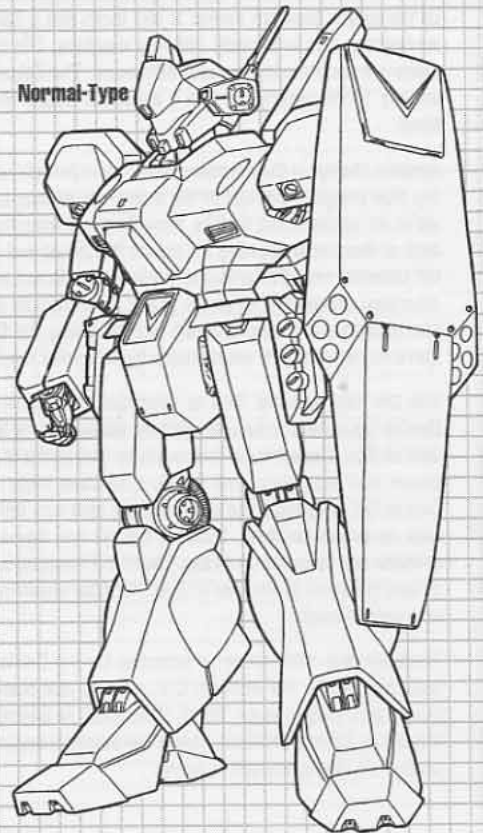
Thrusters: 57 160 kg x1, 12 320 kg x8

Max thrust: 155 720 kg

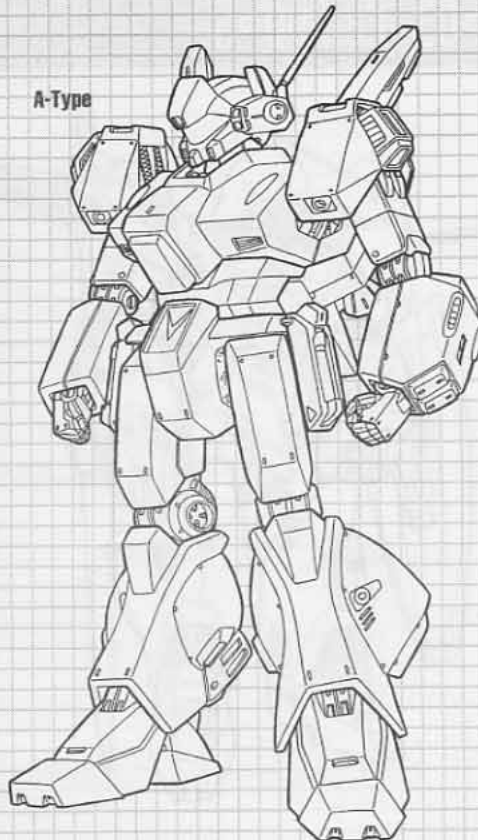
Apogee motors: 30

Armament: one 60 mm twin vulcan cannon pod (head), one twin grenade pack (forearm), four rockets launchers x2 (shield), two beam sabers, one beam rifle, shield.

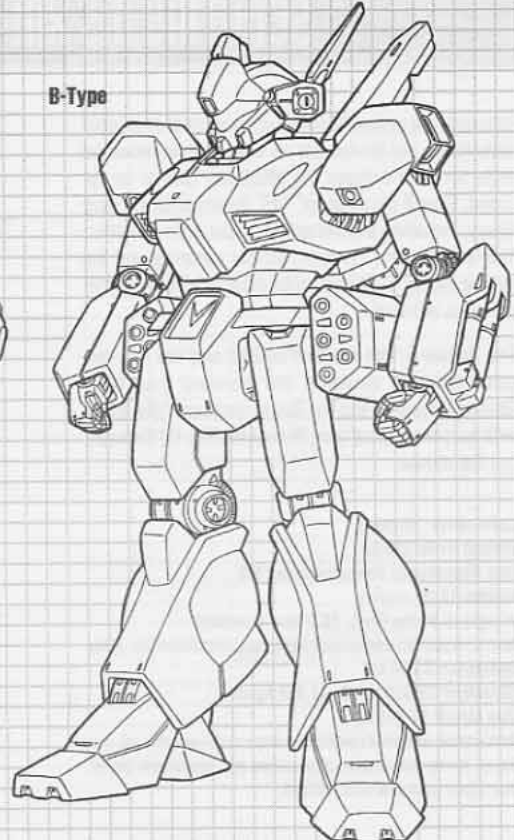
Normal-Type



A-Type



B-Type



COMBAT MS XM-01 "DEN'AN ZON" AND XM-02 "DEN'AN GEI":

The Den'an Zon is the MS replacing the quintessential Zakus of the earlier Gundam series. It still looks like a Zaku but technically, this is a totally different machine. The dimensions are certainly the biggest difference. The Zakus were usually 18.00 meters tall with a weight of about 40 to 50 tons!

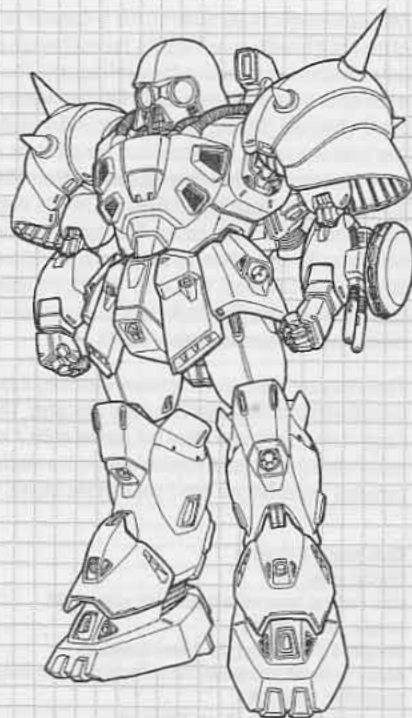
Another change is the presence of two eyes (which look like big blue goggles) instead of the mono-eye sensor camera we're so accustomed to. The shoulders are massive with both of them now sporting the points the Zakus had on the left shoulder only. The armor is much more efficient and the advanced articulation systems give it an incredible agility. The thrust/weight ratio is much higher, giving the Den'an Zon a maneuverability unattainable by the earlier machines.

The low rank officers' Suit of Crossbones Vanguard, the Den'an Gei seems to be a souped-up version of the XM-01 Den'an Zon. The armor is improved, as well as the thruster power and weaponry. One of the distinctive traits of the Den'an Gei is its head; the shoulders are also very different, with no points on them. Instead, the left one has a triple grenade rack installed on its top. The rest of the body is more or less the same as the Den'an Zon. Thruster power is quite improved though.

There are two different color schemes for the Den'an Zon and Gei: grey for the ordinary C.V. soldiers and black with purple and gold trim for "Black Vanguard" (a special elite unit led by Zabiné Chareux). Those two versions are present on and off during the entire movie.

Code name: Den'an Zon
Official code: XM-01
Use: Crossbones Vanguard close combat MS (soldier type)
Height: 14.00 meters
Weight: 7.9 tons (dry), 17.4 tons (combat)
Armor material: compound high-ceramics/titanium alloy
Generator: 3 880 kW
Thrusters: 17 310 kg x2, 8 950 kg x2, 4 450 kg x4
Max thrust: 70 360 kg
Apogee motors: 84
Armament: one shot runther (gun form), heavy machine-guns x2, one dual beam gun, one beam shield (round type), one beam saber.

Code name: Den'an Gei
Official code: XM-02
Use: Crossbones Vanguard close combat MS (low rank officer)
Height: 13.90 meters
Weight: 7.1 tons (dry), 19.2 tons (combat)
Armor material: compound high-ceramics/titanium alloy
Generator: 4 020 kW
Thrusters: 17 790 kg x2, 11 030 kg x2, 8 700 kg x2, 1 340 kg x4
Max thrust: 80 400 kg
Apogee motors: 76
Armament: one beam rifle, one beam gun, one beam shield (polygonal type), one beam saber, one triple grenade rack (shoulder mounted), 20 mm vulcan guns x2 (head).

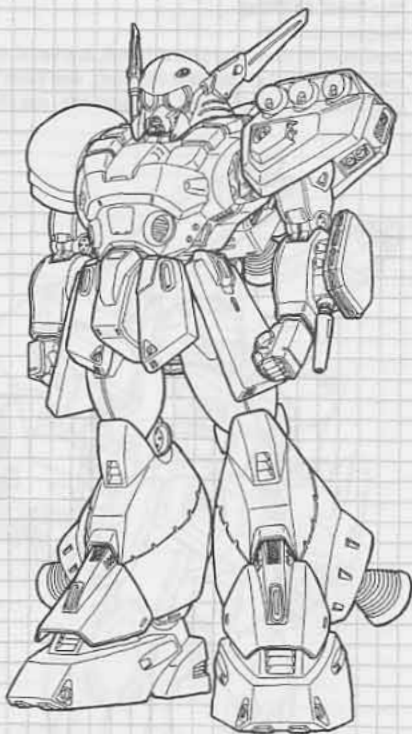
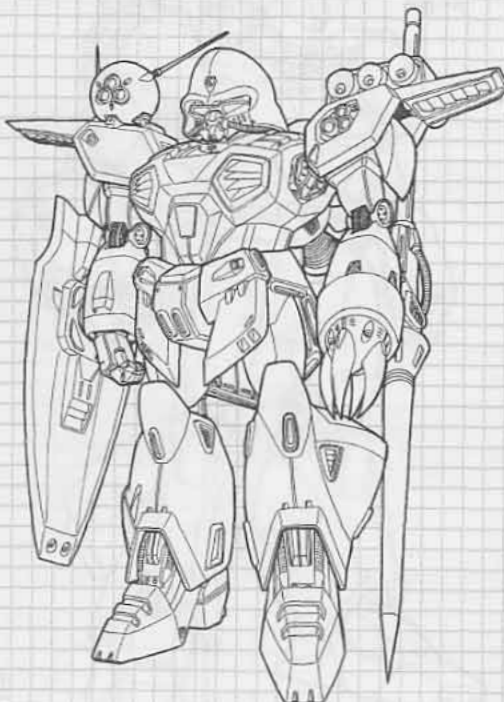


SCOUTING MS XM-03 "EBIRHU-S":

Although the ugliest Mobile Suit ever made (personal taste here), the Ebirhu-s is an enemy to be reckoned with. Small and mean, its efficiency cannot be ignored. Even if it's a "scout" MS, its armament is very heavy, including a small drone on the right shoulder. The left shoulder contains sensor cameras and the left leg has an ECM pod on its exterior side. Thruster power is minimal.

The Ebirhu-S, like the Den'an Zon and Gei has two paint schemes available: the standard grey (C.V. Standard soldier) and the Black Vanguard type, black with purple and gold trim. We see the XM-03 throughout the movie.

Code name: Ebirhu-S
Official code: XM-03
Use: Crossbones Vanguard scout MS
Height: 13.20 meters
Weight: 6.8 tons (dry), 16.7 tons (combat)
Armor material: compound high-ceramics/titanium alloy
Generator: 3 090 kW
Thrusters: 22 540 kg x2, 11 390 kg x2
Max thrust: 67 840 kg
Armament: one shot runther, heavy machine-guns x4, one beam spray-gun drone, shot claws x4, one beam saber, one triple grenade rack, shield.



COMMAND MS XM-04 "BERGA-GIROS" AND XM-05 "BERGA-DALAS":

The Crossbones Vanguard's high rank officer MS, the Berga-Dalas is heavily armored and equipped with the best weapons available. Only one exist: it is the prototype for the XM-05 Berga-Giros and is piloted by Dorel Ronah (see Character guide, p.8).

Its head is very distinctive with a crest much like the one the ancient Greek wore on their helmets. Although it is usually hand-held on other designs, the right forearm has the shot runther attached to it. The back-pack thruster assembly has two special characteristics: the six articulated, fin-funnel like thruster/drones (but it is not specified what these things really are) and an outlet for a beam flag (it's just like a beam saber but with an electromagnetic field effecting the shape of a flag with the C.V.'s insignia. A nifty piece of hardware!).

The Berga-Giros is the operational version of the Berga-Dalas (XM-04) prototype. The Berga-Giros isn't very different from the Berga-Dalas: only details distinguish them from each other. The back-pack thruster assembly is nearly the same, the only difference being the number of thruster/drones (8 instead of 6) and their shape.

The armament stays the same, except for the shot runther, which is now hand-held and mounts four heavy machine-guns (instead of two).

The Berga-Dalas has a light purple overall paint job, with golden yellow trim. We see it throughout the entire movie. There are two paint schemes for the Berga-Giros: a light purple with light grey trim and a Black Vanguard version, which is black with purple trim and gold head antennae. There's only one of the latter type, piloted by Zabiné Chareux. We see this Mobile Suit during the first 2/3 of the movie.

Code name: Berga-Giros

Official code: XM-05

Use: Crossbones Vanguard command MS (standard)

Height: 15.80 meters

Weight: 9.1 tons (dry), 22.7 tons (combat)

Armor material: compound high-ceramics/titanium alloy

Generator: 4 790 kW

Thrusters: 21 820 kg x2, 8 950 kg x3, 3 460 kg x8

Max thrust: 98 170 kg

Apogee motors: 73

Armament: one shot runther (hand-held type), heavy machine-guns x4, beam sabers x2, one beam shield.

Code name: Berga-Dalas

Official code: XM-04

Use: Crossbones Vanguard command MS (MS assault force)

Height: 15.80 meters

Weight: 9.3 tons (dry), 22.1 tons (combat)

Armor material: compound high-ceramics/titanium alloy

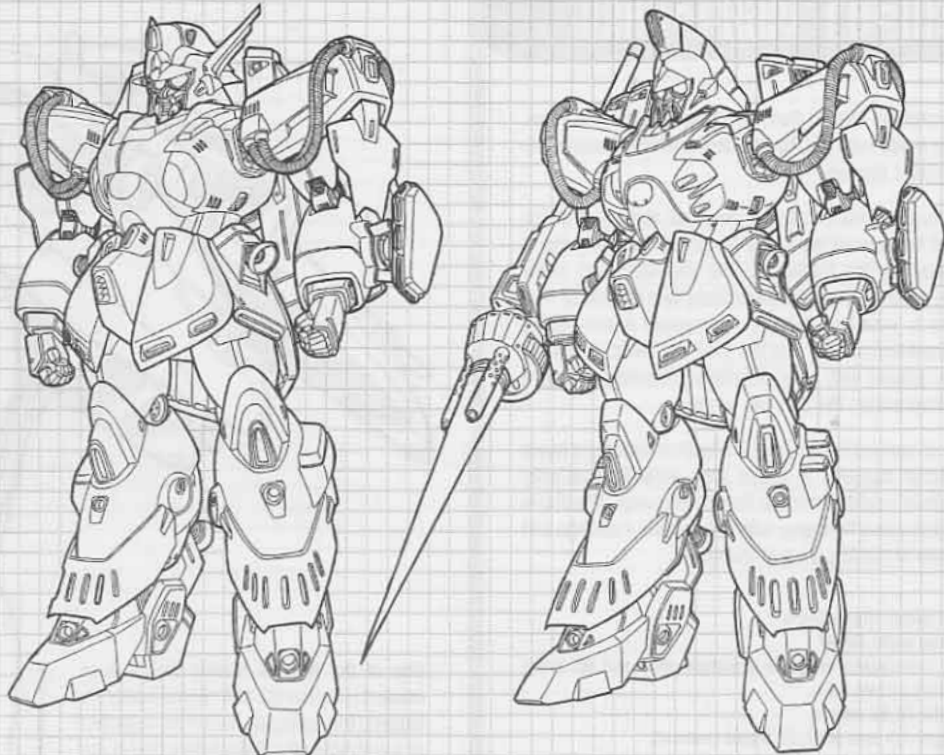
Generator: 4 530 kW

Thrusters: 22 500 kg x2, 8 950 kg x3, 3 460 kg x8

Max thrust: 92 690 kg

Apogee motors: 82

Armament: one shot runther (right forearm), heavy machine-guns x2, beam sabers x2, one beam shield.



SCOUTING MS XM-06 "DAGHI-IRIS":

One of the best Mobile Suit designs of F91, the Daghi-Iris has apparently been conceived for the superior officers of the scout forces. It sports a head reminiscent of the Berga-Giros', with two antennae and a crest. But instead of the two round, goggles-like eyes, there is a single viewpane (probably protecting multiple mono-eye type sensor cameras). The shoulders are very wide with two articulated flap and sensor cameras on each of them.

We see two paint scheme for the XM-06 in Gundam F91: a dark green with light sand trim and some touches of red, and a light sand with red trim (after Anna-Maria Broughia's defection to the Federation). The Daghi-Iris is seen on and off during the movie.

Code name: Daghi-Iris

Official code: XM-06

Use: Crossbones Vanguard command scout MS

Height: 15.00 meters

Weight: 9.7 tons (dry), 22.5 tons (combat)

Armor material: compound high-ceramics/titanium alloy

Generator: 3 620 kW

Thrusters: 25 540 kg x2, 11 320 kg x2, 8 950 kg x3

Max thrust: 100 570 kg

Apogee motors: 87

Armament: one beam rifle, one triple diffusion beam cannon (beam spray-gun), one beam saber, shield.



XM-07 "VIGNA-GHINA":

A prototype Mobile Suit, the Vigna-Ghina was especially made for Vera Ronah, Queen of the Crossbones Vanguard domain.

The head of the V-G keeps the crest and some of the facial features of the Berga-Giros but the viewpane is inspired by the Daghi-Iris. The shoulders and lower body are also a mix between those two machines. The torso is modified though, the cockpit hatch sliding forward horizontally just like the F91. The back-pack is quite special with eight directional thrusters that give the impression the Suit has wings!

The armament is composed of beam weapons; a beam launcher bazooka is added after Vera Ronah/Cecily Fairchild's defection to the Federation's side. The V-G is painted a very light grey with light purple markings and is seen in the last third of the movie.

Code name: Vigna-Ghina

Official code: XM-07

Use: Crossbones Vanguard prototype command MS (Vera Ronah's private MS)

Height: 15.80 meters

Weight: 8.9 tons (dry), 22.5 tons (combat)

Armor material: compound high-ceramics/titanium alloy

Generator: 4 790 kW

Thrusters: 22 950 kg x2, 8 950 kg x2, 4 490 kg x8

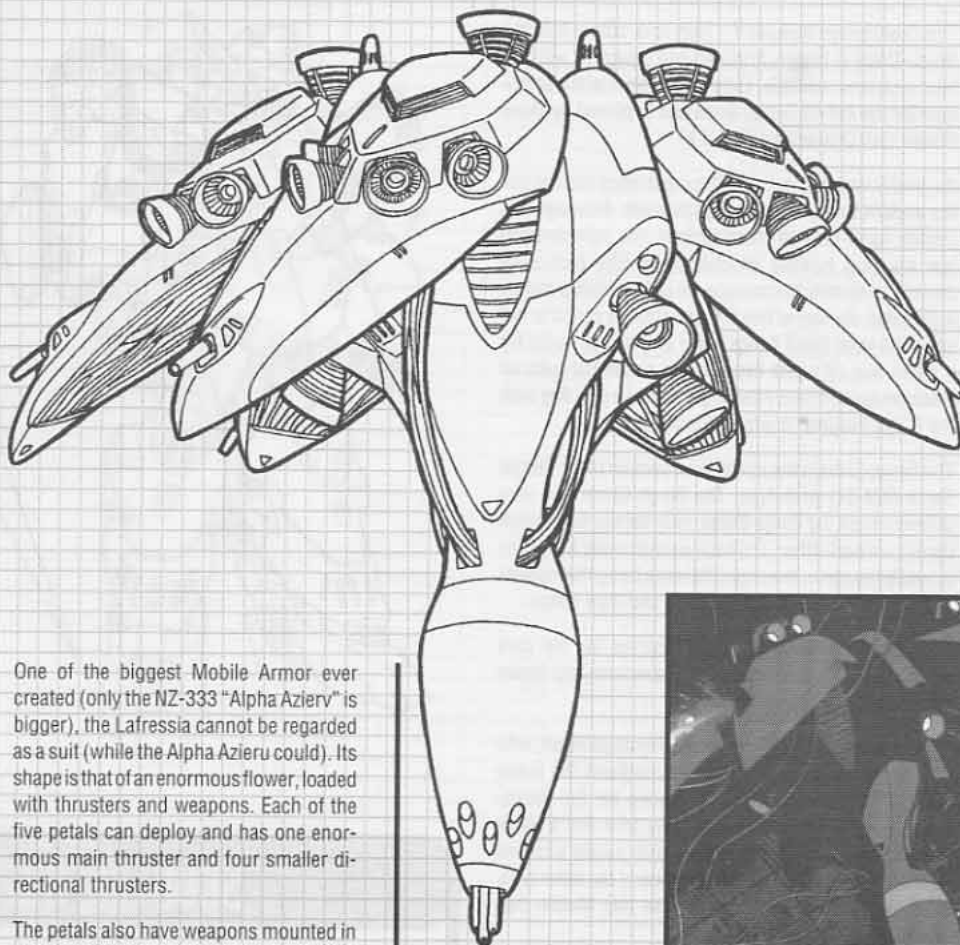
Max thrust: 97 720 kg

Apogee motors: 87

Armament: one beam rifle, one beam saber, one beam launcher bazooka, one beam shield.



PROTOTYPE MOBILE ARMOR XMA-01 "LAFRESSIA":



One of the biggest Mobile Armor ever created (only the NZ-333 "Alpha Azierv" is bigger), the Lafressia cannot be regarded as a suit (while the Alpha Azierv could). Its shape is that of an enormous flower, loaded with thrusters and weapons. Each of the five petals can deploy and has one enormous main thruster and four smaller directional thrusters.

The petals also have weapons mounted in them: one mega-beam cannon and 25 heat rod tentacles for each. The main body (the stem of the flower) contains five mega-gain cannons, four beam cannons and eight diffusion beam cannons. The cockpit is located in the corolla of the flower and is nothing more than a glass dome.

The Lafressia's color is red. That machine is piloted by Koroza Ronah and is a secret weapon developed without the permission of Meitzer Ronah, the current master of Crossbones Vanguard. We see the Lafressia for about ten minutes, at the very end of the movie.

Code name: Lafressia

Official code: XMA-01

Use: Crossbones Vanguard prototype Mobile Armor

Height: 37.50 meters

Weight: 184.5 tons (dry), 263.7 tons (combat)

Armor material: compound high-ceramics/titanium alloy

Generator: 31 650 kW

Thrusters: 52 020 kg x5, 43 350 kg x5, 28 900 kg x20

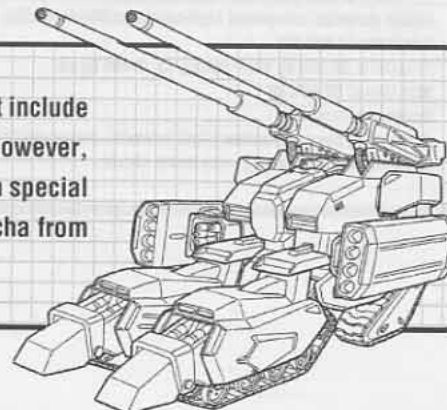
Max thrust: 1 054 850 kg

Apogee motors: 40

Armament: mega-gain cannons x5, mega-beam cannons x5, beam cannons x4, diffusion beam cannons x8, tentacle heat rods x125



Due to a lack of space, we couldn't include the Guntank in the mecha files. However, we will present in the near future a special file containing all the missing mecha from our previous issues. Don't miss it!



GUNDAM 0080: WAR IN THE POCKET

by Martin Ouellette

EPISODE 5 :

"BERNIE, TELL ME YOU'RE LYING"

End of last episode: at the commands of the Gundam, Chris opens fire with the 90 mm gatling gun, ripping Misha's Kämpfer to shreds. Al sprints away, as the bomb set by Garcia explodes, blowing a hole into the colony's wall. He sees Bernie and Schneider, and runs to them. Bernie pulls his gun on him before realizing who he is.

THE ZEON LUNAR BASE

Report: Operation Rubicon has failed. Gundam still operational on Side 6. Condition of Cyclops unit unknown.

A mechanic working on a nuclear missile is roughly stopped by a Zeon officer. He retorts that he's following the Chu-sa's orders (Chu-sa means Commander). Commander Killing arrives and the officer turns to him asking what is going on. Killing acts innocently when the officer tells him he never authorized the use of nuclear weapons, then say he didn't bother to ask for permission and defiantly ignores his superior's orders.

Insulted beyond names, the officer nearly takes a swing at Killing who, in turn, shoots him down in cold blood. Killing's men then eliminate the officer's aides who were trying to come to his rescue. Killing stares at the mechanics "Resume your work. As of now, I'm in command of Granada."

CHRIS IN THE PROFESSOR'S OFFICE, FEDERATION BASE, RIAH COLONY, SIDE 6

The police wants to speak to Chris near the Zeon Mobile Suit. Worried, she goes out to a group of men standing near the remains of the Kämpfer. One of them is surprised that such a beautiful young girl is the pilot of the Gundam. Chris smiles shyly. Then the officers start to interrogate her (rather rudely). They inquire if she knows about two Zeon soldier who would have escaped into the city and if she has any comments about the alleged involvement of insiders. Chris answers negatively. When she asks them "Is that all?", one of the officers loses the meager politeness he had left, shouting that people will get killed if Zeon makes another move. He then wonders why they would attack the neutral colony. As Chris has no answer to that, the man concludes that she knows but will not tell him. He tries again stating that Zeon attacked because the Federa-

tion was secretly conducting Mobile Suit research while publicly saying that their stay was temporary.

Again, Chris refuses to answer.

The officer stares at her and tell her about the casualties of the attack. Now it's Chris' turn to be furious as she defends her choice of action. The officer calms down, explaining that writing off people's death is hard, regardless of the numbers.

Chris looks away dejectedly (in fact, she's about to cry) as the men go away.

IN THE SHINRIN PARK

Al comes out of a fast food restaurant, on his way to meet Bernie, when he stops near a destroyed building from which the rescue teams have just dragged out the body of a kid about Al's age. Al freaks out and runs away.

In the Shinrin park (where the Zaku crashed) Bernie sits down, thinking again of Captain Schneider's last moments. He is looking at the cross on Schneider's grave as he thinks about a conversation he had with Charlie (the Pink Elephant's owner) a few hours ago...

Bernie tells him about the death of everyone except himself. Charlie grieves. He hands him a passport and urges him to leave the colony.

Bernie makes a surprised face. He wanted to wait until things settled down.

Charlie finally admits that it would be safer. He tells Bernie that if the Gundam isn't destroyed by Christmas, the Granada fleet will use nuclear weapons and annihilate the colony.

Bernie's jaw almost falls to the ground. The only thing to do is run away, but Charlie does not intend to leave, feeling he's too old to abandon a colony he likes.

Bernie's train of thought is broken by the sound of the trip-wire he had rigged up with pots and pans. He gets his gun out and hides behind a tree. Al's voice rings out. A relieved Bernie steps from behind a tree. After making sure no one followed Al, they sit down. Al is still preoccupied by death, and Bernie tries to explain it. He gives Al a hamburger, and has to unwrap it for him. After a few moments, Bernie finds the courage to tell Al that he's leaving the colony. Al doesn't accept it and asks him if he's running away. Bernie answers by the affirmative, and Al accuses him of giving up.

Bernie replies that he knows how Al feels about that, but the boy doesn't want to hear about it. Raising his voice, Bernie tries to explain the imminence of the destruction because of the Gundam.

Al stands aghast. He refuses to leave with his mom and protests that the only thing to do for Bernie is to destroy the Gundam before Christmas! Bernie nearly loses his mind at the idea. He has to confess the terrible truth: he hasn't shot down a single Mobile Suit.

After all Bernie said about being an ace, Al just can't believe it.

Bernie is ashamed and explains that he is a greenhorn who just got dragged along. Al believes that Bernie is scared and is trying to cover it with lies. Bernie's voice raises another octave and admits that he is indeed really scared. Then he gets up. Al shouts "Wait!" but Bernie doesn't want to hear anything.

Al puts his arms around Bernie and begs him to try, at least.

Bernie takes the Cyclops team badge Schneider had given to Al and shows him the bug inside, then tells him the truth about his role in the whole affair. Then he orders him to save himself and leave the colony. Al shakes his head "What about everyone else? (smile) Let's beat the Gundam together. Then..."

Bernie looks away and tells him that he already made up his mind.

Al nearly spits on him: "I hate you!" He runs away, comes back and throws the ripped badge at Bernie, threatening to show it to the police. Bernie gives him a frigid glare "Go ahead. You'll be executed too. You're an accomplice!"

Al runs away.

IN AN ARCADE

Al stares at a guy blowing up transformable mechas in a videogame. When the last one blows, Al has a vision of the colony being destroyed. Suddenly, he feels a grip on his arm and looks up at a police officer who asks him if he shouldn't be in school at this hour. In his head, Al hears the voice of Bernie telling him "You're an accomplice. You'll be executed too. Executed..." He runs away.

A RUINED HOUSE

Chris crouches to retrieve a little musical box and opens it. The music starts to play as her pain about all the deaths and destruction begins to well up. Seeing Al passing by, she stands up and runs to him. As they walk together, she senses that something is bothering him. Al stays silent and Chris asks him about Bernie. He turns to her angrily: "Who cares!?" and continues to walk. Looking at the ground, he asks Chris what she would do if a space fleet threatened the colony. Chris answers that she would fight. She goes to sit on a rail.

Al is stunned and wonders if she would be afraid.

Yes, she would be. But she couldn't bear being alone, surviving while her parents and all her friends died. Al gazes at her: "Only a coward would run, right?"

Chris shakes her head and looks to the ground, as if talking to herself, a sad note in her voice. She explains that she would do it for herself, and the person running away would do it for himself too, so there's no right answer. She gets up.

Al smiles and takes off. Chris calls to him and asks him to say hello to Bernie.

AT THE SPACEPORT

Bernie asks the attendant if there is any seats left. The guy answers by the affirmative. Bernie asks for a ticket to "anywhere".

As the attendant doesn't look pleased, Bernie notices an advertisement for Francheska and buys a ticket to that colony. Then he goes to the bar for a drink. Maybe to forget...

IN FRONT OF THE DESTROYED SCHOOL

Al, walking in front of his demolished school, decides to go take a look but is chased off by a worker. Furious, Al continues on his way, when he hears the same man shout "You too, get outta here!" Then, Chay and Telcott are unceremoniously ejected from the site, running like crazy, trying to escape the wrath of the worker.

Al joins them and the two start to explain their cool adventure of the night before when a Zeon Mobile Suit destroyed the school. The two recount that they were there, right after the attack though. Chay leans over to Al and shows him a handful of cartridges while Telcott pulls out a cannon cartridge from his bag (it probably came from the Kämpfer's shotgun). Al is holding back tears and the boys believe that he is jealous of the armament they found. Telcott is concerned about Al. The two try to cheer him up but Al can only give them a totally false laugh.

THE ZEON GRANADA FLEET

On the bridge of the flagship, the captain receives a transmission from Commander Killing. Killing's face appears: "We've decided on the time of operation. December 25th, 00 00 hour." The captain asks him if he really means to use the nuclear missiles. Killing asks if he will go against his orders; the captain answers no. Killing gives him a wicked smile and wishes him good luck.

AT THE POLICE STATION

Al, in front of the police station, decides to tell them everything, hoping they will understand. He gets in and starts to explain what's going to happen. The officer doesn't seem impressed and almost laughs at him. Al tries one more time.

The officer looks at him more closely and recognizes him as the kid from the hit and run incident.

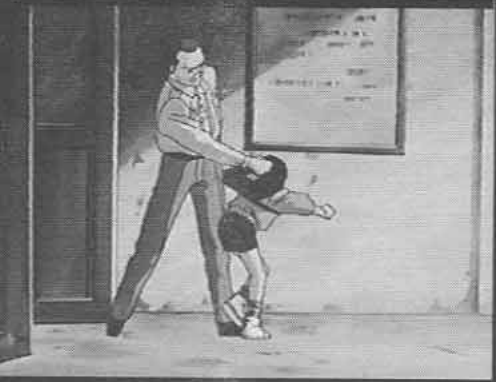
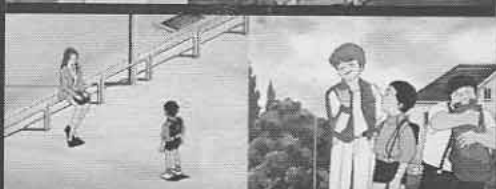
Al protests but the cop just doesn't believe him "All right, go home or I'll call your parents!" Al starts to go out, stops in the hallway and screams "Everyone is going to die! Baka!! (idiot)... OK, die! See if I care!"

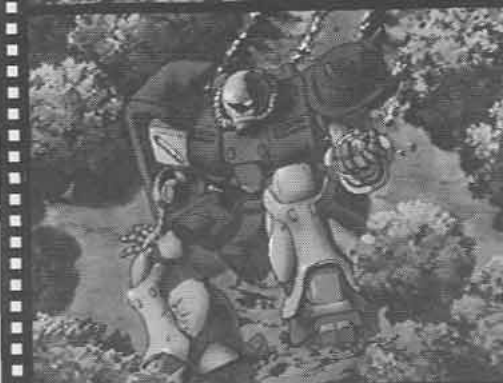
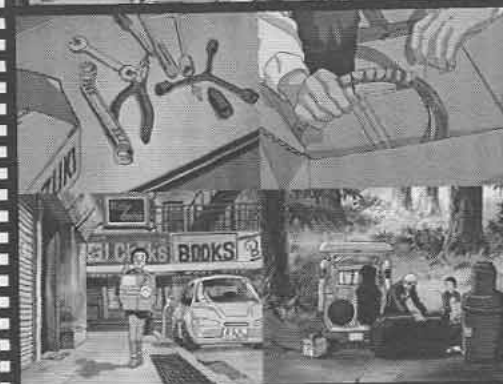
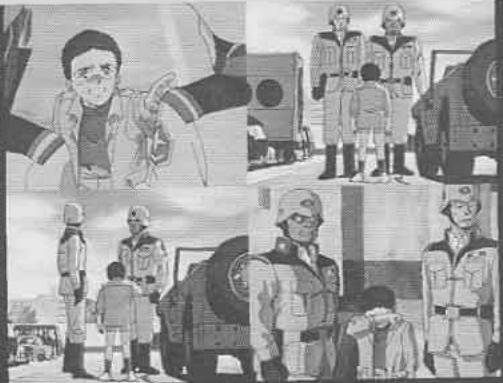
SPACEPORT, RIAH COLONY, SIDE 6

The flight for Francesca leaves in 30 minutes. Bernie glances around. He sees a young woman with red hair leaning on the bar: "Chris!" But when he gets there, the girl isn't Chris. Bernie, feeling depressed, asks for a double whiskey and water, as the young woman orders another. When the bartender tells her that she's had enough, the girl gets angry.

The waitress makes Bernie's drink first. He looks at Al's badge.

The girl with the red hair pays and goes to a public phone. It seems that her boyfriend had promised to marry her but





left instead. When she starts to talk about lies, Bernie's determination to leave Al to a certain death begins to crumble. He has a flashback: Al looking at him imploringly and asking if he could beat the Gundam...Charlie smiling "I like this colony..." Al again "Easy win?" The flashback ends.

AL, AT HOME

His mother announces him that his father is coming home for good, on Christmas. Al is shaken. She wonders about it, but he reassures her. She smiles.

(Meanwhile, Bernie is burning his ticket).

Al retires to his room, sits on his bed, and starts to think about his father and the imminent destruction.

The phone rings. It's Bernie! Al jumps up and dashes out to the phone, asking Bernie to forgive him and save the people of the colony. Bernie tells him that's what he plans on doing and that he'll need his help. Al reacts enthusiastically and asks him if things will be OK. Bernie smiles "Yeah, things will be OK".

Al grins "I love you, Bernie".

"Idiot..." (with affection in his voice).

EPISODE 6 : "WAR IN THE POCKET"

End of last episode: The threat of a nuclear attack on the colony almost pushes Bernie to leave. Al is cheerful about his father's return, but at the same time, he is fearful about the outcome of the attack that will take place on Christmas day. Finally, Bernie changes his mind and informs an enthusiastic Al of his intention to fight the Gundam...

IN THE SHINRIN PARK

Al and Bernie are working on the fallen Zaku. The repairs seem to be going well. Smiling, Al asks Bernie if he can beat the Gundam. Bernie replies with a confident voice "Easy win!"

WALKING ALONG

Bernie tells Al that they need tools, spare parts for the Zaku, and weapons. They can buy the tools but will have to pick up parts from crashed GM. Al's face lights up like a Christmas tree "It's like a treasure hunt."

Bernie takes a serious expression and warns him of the danger. Al takes a devil-may-care attitude. Bernie laughs.

DRIVING ALONG

Al and Bernie are heading for the two trucks full of weapons left by Misha but unluckily, they arrive as one of the truck is being towed. Al is a little panicked, but there is still one van in the parking lot.

They make it just on time to see two Federation soldiers talking to the attendant. Al has a good idea: as the two soldiers are looking around the truck, they suddenly hear

- a crashing sound. They turn around to see a young kid beating the crap out of their Jeep with a metal pipe! Al keeps their attention by accusing them and the Feds of killing his dad. The soldiers are taken aback by such an accusation.

- The kid starts to cry as he tries to explain that he lost his dad in the battle. The soldiers are sympathetic, telling him that Zeons are the ones to blame and asking him not to do anything like this again. Then they hear the sound of an engine and turn around to see the truck they were looking at being driven away! Once at the park, Bernie congratulates Al for his acting performance. Al is proud of himself...They go to town to get another car. Bernie stops on the side of a street and concentrates. Al asks him what he is thinking about. Bernie answers with a cold voice that he will need more weapons. An idea flashes through his mind as he sees a giant Santa balloon.

- Al gives him a puzzled glance.

- Bernie goes to a phone booth, starts to look through the phone book and finds the Denis Co's number (they're the makers of the balloons). He finds out that the place is open at this hour. They head out for it. Bernie knocks the salesman unconscious.

- The two take the pieces of equipment they need and come out.

- Bernie explains to Al that they'll set a trap, using these balloons and smoke dischargers. It will take place in the forest over by the Federation base so they won't hurt any bystanders.

- Later, Al, in his room, thinking back about Bernie's plan: to lead the Gundam into the trap and surprise it. Then, beat it with just the heat-hawk...

- During the next few days, Al and Bernie work like maniacs to repair the Zaku and to set the trap. And, on a glorious afternoon, the Zaku wakes up, holding Al in the palm of its enormous hand.

THAT NIGHT

- Bernie looks down at Al, trying to cheer him up for his dad's arrival. As Al cannot play a role in the fighting part, he gives him another assignment: to deliver a parcel. Al wants to know where to take it. The instructions are on the disk. If the mission fails...if Bernie die, Al must follow the orders on the disk. Al is more than a little wary.

- Bernie makes an attempt to reassure him of his victory over the Gundam.

- They arrive at Al's house and he gets out of the car. Bernie wishes him Merry Christmas. Al starts to walk home but turns back to the car "You're not going to die, right? You're going to win, right?"

- Bernie gives him a comforting smile "Of course. Just leave it to me."

- The boy goes home. Bernie glances at Chris' house and drives off. Later, Al is kneeling and praying to God for Bernie's safety.

02 00 PM, 25TH OF DECEMBER, 0079 U.C.,
RIAH COLONY, SIDE 6

Bernie is getting ready to fight the Gundam while Al and his mom are waiting for Al's dad to arrive. In the elevator, Al's dad tells them that he saw a spaceship battle during his flight. He also explains that one of the ships who surrendered to the Federation was carrying nuclear weapons. Al's face darkens. At the next stop, Al gets off the elevator and starts to run to the Federation base.

Meanwhile, Bernie's Zak is heading in the same direction. As he's spotted, Chris runs in the hallway, towards the Gundam's hangar. She gets into the cockpit and launches the Gundam. As she arrives to the Zak's location, Bernie turns back and rushes to the forest. He smiles. The Gundam is following as planned.

In the command center, the Federation officer freaks out when he learns that Chris is moving towards a mountainous and forested terrain. He orders her to retreat because the Zaku has the advantage in that kind of terrain. Chris replies that the incline is uninhabited.

The officer is flummoxed but Chris continues to pursue the Zak, not paying any attention to the officer's protests. She fires a volley with the 90 mm gatling gun, nearly blowing the Zaku's head off. But the Zeon machine ducks and continues its march to higher lands. Camouflaged by the smoke dischargers, Bernie turns on his heat-hawk and sets off the giant Santa balloon. Chris fires on it (all this time, Al is running in the forest, screaming to Bernie to run away), tearing it to shreds. Then Bernie sets off the snow man balloon. Chris fires in its direction, then turns around to see the Zaku spring up and charge her. Taking a few steps back, she fires the gatling. A few shots impact on the Zak and Bernie is wounded in the head by shrapnel. But he manages to land a blow on the Gundam's torso, nearly cutting the cockpit area in two, wounding Chris in the arm. The Zak rams the Gundam with its shoulder and the two machines fall to the ground, sliding on the incline. The Gundam trips some wires, and the grenades Bernie had set explode, as the machines keep sliding down. Chris fires the Gundam thrusters, disengaging herself from Bernie's Zaku. She impacts on the wall of the base and gets the Gundam up, while the Zaku (minus an arm) walks toward her. Al, seeing this, nearly loses his mind and screams "Stop!! Bernie!! Bernie!! You don't have to fight anymore!!"

At the bottom of the incline, the two MS face off. Chris fires up her beam saber, as Bernie sets his heat-hawk at maximum power. Then they charge each other. Bernie swings the enormous axe but only decapitates the Gundam. Al sees the head fall but the machine continues on its way and runs its saber through the Zaku's cockpit. Al screams at the top of his lungs "Bernie!!"

The Zaku's power system overloads and the machine explodes, blowing the Gundam backwards. Al is knocked down by the force of the explosion and falls unconscious. He wakes up in time to see

- Chris being extracted from the Gundam's cockpit.
- Then, he falls back in shock...

THE CONTENT OF THE DISK

- "Al, listen to me. This package contains a taped confession and my ID papers. I wrote out all I know about why this colony has been targeted for a nuclear attack. If I die, take this to the police. If the adults believe you, the colony can probably be saved. I thought about turning myself in to the police but...I don't know, that seemed like running away. I felt like, if I didn't stay and fight, I wasn't being true to myself...It's not that I hate the Federation or that I want to avenge the Captain and the others, or anything like that. I can't explain it very well, but I want to fight the Gundam now. Maybe it's because I'm a soldier, I don't know the reason myself. Al, I'll probably die... But I don't want you to hate the Federation soldiers or the Gundam pilot because of that. They're just doing the same thing as I: doing what they feel is right. This may be asking too much, but I don't want you to hate others or blame yourself. That's my last request. If I get lucky and survive, and the war comes to an end, I'll come back to this colony. I will come back and see you. That's a promise. Well, this is it. Later, Al. Take care of yourself. And say Hi to Chris for me..."

AL'S HOUSE

- Al is sitting at the table for breakfast. His dad (after an amusing scene where he wipes his face with his wife's apron) reads his newspaper (1/4/0080-Headline "Success").
- After breakfast, Al leaves for school and his dad notices he has matured.
- As he walks along, Al sees Chris, who runs to him and gladly announces that she has been transferred to Earth. Al is surprised.
- Chris nods; she wanted to say goodbye to him and (long pause) to Bernie. She would like Al to tell him.
- Al gets teary "Yeah, Bernie will, he'll, he'll miss you, I bet."
- She kisses him goodbye.

AT SCHOOL

- The principal makes a speech about the high cost of victory. (Al starts to cry) He adds that he hopes they have learned the horror of war and will strive to create a peaceful world. Dorothy is worried about Al and wants to get the teacher.
- Chay and Telcott turn to Al. Chay takes a paternalistic tone and tells Al not to cry, for there will be other wars, cooler, bigger and more fun. Telcott is even more enthusiastic about another major conflict.
- "Yeah, and this time we'll get not just cartridges but unexploded shells and maybe we'll even get a military..." (The sentence is drowned in the background).



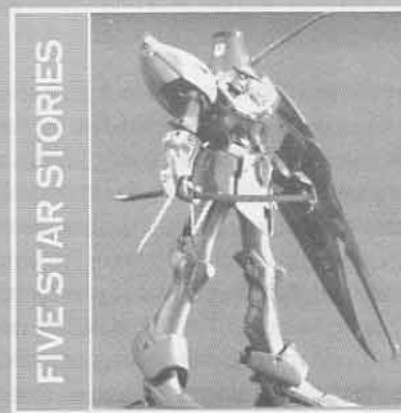
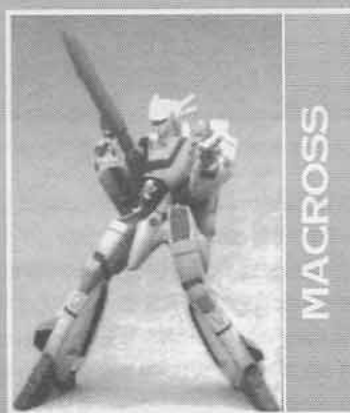
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STRUCTURAL MATERIALS

By Dominique Durocher

Structural materials are those used as load bearing paths, that is, the elements that hold an object together. This is opposed to non-structural materials that are used for finishing and decoration. These materials are classified into two major groups. The first is steels and other alloys, namely all metals and metal combinations. The second is non-metallic materials: plastics, ceramics and composites.

STEELS AND ALLOYS

Metals and metallic alloys are the most widely used and best known structural materials. They are known for their high tensile strength, electrical conductivity, ductility and isotropic (equal in all directions) properties.

Among these, steel is the most common. It is one of the earliest known alloys, the best understood and the most varied in types and uses. There are literally hundreds of different grades of steel. Steel is defined as an iron alloy. This means that its major, or greatest single component is iron. This does not mean that steel is mostly iron (some steels contain less than 30%), but that no other component will exceed it in quantity. The basic, and earliest, steel contains only carbon. The quantity of carbon determines the properties of the steel. Most carbon steels will contain between 0.5 and 4.3% of carbon. Useful properties change little beyond 6%. A very small variation in carbon content can have a large effect on the alloy's properties.

Most steel alloys include other metals to modify specific properties. Chromium is often added to help prevent corrosion, these are usually called stainless steels. Nickel steels are generally more heat tolerant. Many such alloys using combinations of chromium, nickel, copper, carbon and others are used for various applications.

Many other metals are used as structural materials. The most common of these is aluminum and the aluminum-copper alloy duralumine. They are extremely light and stronger than the equivalent weight of steel. Aluminum structures are lighter, but larger than steel. They are also more corrosion resistant and ductile. Aluminum is also much more difficult to weld. Duralumine is used as the main structural material in most aircrafts. Titanium is comparable in weight to aluminum, but has about the same strength as steel. It is also much more heat tolerant,

- maintaining most of its room-temperature strength at 500°C when steels' are reduced by 50%, aluminum's by 70%. Titanium is generally used for applications like high-temperature area sheeting, engine mounts and armored cockpit tubs. It is also non-magnetic, meaning that it does not affect nor is it affected by magnetic fields.
- Some classes of Soviet submarines have titanium hulls to avoid magnetic anomaly detection. It is expensive and considerably more difficult to form and machine, making any use of it quite costly. Nickel alloys, under the names Hastalloy and Inconel, are used for areas of extreme heat and high stresses like turbine blades and burner exhausts.

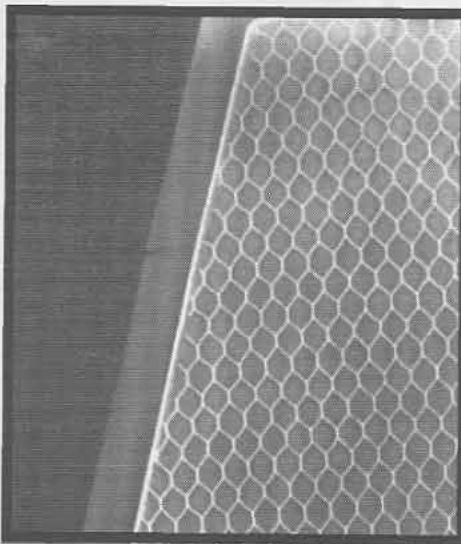


Fig. 1 X-ray of an aluminium honeycomb skin panel.

- Not only are metals inherently strong, they can be subjected to a number of heat treatments, like hardening and tempering, chemical treatments, surface treatments and coatings to enhance their properties. Each of these possibilities can easily fill many volumes. They also have a great variety of forming processes. Casting will give general shapes for most applications, with some machining to obtain smooth surfaces and some holes, such as is the case with piston engine blocs. Extrusion, or forcing a semi-solidified material through a die, can be used to create long shapes such as I-beams and tubes for structural elements. They can also be pressed to form complex curvature skins, as with the skins of air and spacecrafts. Many of these techniques are usually combined to produce a final part. Thin metal sheets can also be glued together and stretched out to form cell-like structures called honeycomb. When bonded to surface skins, this honeycomb can form surprisingly light and rigid structures, as in figure 1.

NON-METALLIC MATERIALS

- Other than wood and concrete, very few non-metallic materials have been used structurally, but rather only decoratively. In recent decades however, advances in materials technologies have made many of them extremely useful.

CERAMICS

- Ceramics are the first known transformed materials. Bricks, concrete and glass are structural ceramics. They are an agglomeration of clays and other oxide powders that are fired to form a solid block. They have rarely been used in the construction of mechanical devices, only for static structures like buildings. This is because, although they can be very strong, they are somewhat heavy, not particularly good in tension (being pulled) and they are brittle, breaking suddenly. Their main mechanical use has been as refractive coatings for hot structures, such as jet exhausts and re-entry heat shields. Recent developments however have made ceramics more resilient, and prototype engine blocks and mechanisms are being tested. They are however still confined to high-temperature applications where other materials weaken.

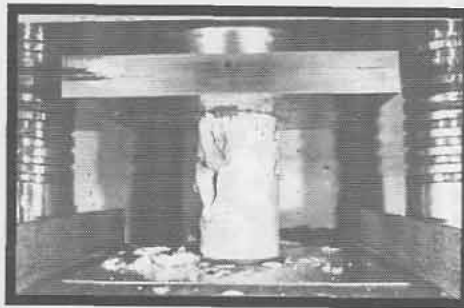


Fig. 2 Compression failure test of a concrete cylinder.

- Another application of ceramics was quite unexpected. Since oxides are usually non-conductive, it was a surprise that an yttrium-barium-copper oxide ceramic was a (relatively) high temperature superconductor at 93 K.

PLASTICS

- Polymers, better known as plastics, are rarely used by themselves as a structural material. They are formed of chains of organic molecules linked into giant molecules. Their main appeal is that they are lightweight. Polymers are inherently weak, their tensile strength rarely comes to a quarter of that of any metal. Therefore, they have generally been used either for low-strength applications, like furniture, or when they do not have to carry extreme loads. A common aerospace application is non-conductive covers for antennae, acrylic (Plexiglass) is used for aircraft windshields and nylon gears are used in some machines, the highest strength application for a non-reinforced polymer. They also have a limited useful temperature range. Below -10°C they can become brittle, and they usually soften considerably above 80°C. Their main contribution to structures is as resins for composites. Although polymers are generally made from petroleum by-products, they can essentially be synthesized from any organic substance, since they are composed of the same basic atoms.

Plastic structures are usually molded by a casting method or more commonly injection molding.

C O M P O S I T E S

Composites are, as the name implies, a combination of two or more materials. Generally, these are fibrous materials encased in a resin matrix. Wood is the oldest and most used composite, since it is naturally available almost everywhere. It consists of organic cellulose fibers in a lignite matrix. It is also where the idea for modern composites comes from. Today, the fibers can be of mineral origin like glass or boron fibers, or organic as with carbon or aramid fibers. The matrix is generally either polyester or epoxy resins.

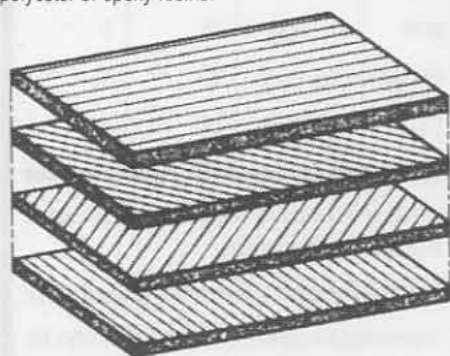


Fig. 3 Typical balanced composite laminate lay-up.

In composites, the fibers are the actual load bearers, since they can easily be ten times the strength of steel. A single perfect glass fiber the size of a hair can lift over two tons, although the slightest nick in it will reduce its strength by 90%. The matrix is used to hold the fibers in place and transmit the load to the fibers. This means that the proportions of resin and fiber greatly influence the properties of the composite. More fibers means a stronger composite, but if there is not enough matrix, fiber cohesion cannot be maintained and the load will not be properly transmitted to the fibers. Also, fibers are very strong along their length, but weak on transversal loads; just as wood is stronger along the grain than across it. Since the orientation of the fibers influences the final properties, this allows the tailoring of the composite's strength by positioning the fibers along the calculated load paths, optimizing strength in the direction it is needed and not wasting strength in directions it would not be used (Fig. 2). They can allow for considerable weight saving over metals. Composites have very different failure modes from metals. Often damage will be deep within the composite and not show on the surface, such as an impact-induced core delamination, effectively changing a part into two weaker ones. They also do not tend to bend before breaking, and composite tears resembles cloth tears. Composite structures are constructed by laying-up a series of fibre uni-directional tape or bi-directional cloth impregnated with resin, called pre-pregs, over a mold to form a composite laminate. The tape is aligned so the

fibres will be in the optimal orientation to the part's operational loads (different layers usually vary in direction for shear and torsion control), then vacuum-bagged and cured in an autoclave at high-temperature and pressure, producing very solid panels. These panels are often bonded to honeycomb for additional reinforcement.

Composites have seen some use in low-strength applications such as small boats and car body panels, notably in the case of fiberglass (also known as glass fiber reinforced plastic, GRP or GFRP). Carbon fibers (CFRP) have also seen much use. Composite panels have been used increasingly in military aviation over the last thirty years, although commercial carriers have been reluctant to follow suit. There are now some all-composite airframes, like that of the V-22 tilt-rotor. Aramid fiber, or Kevlar, is also used as armour, because it makes for very puncture and tear resistant composites. Some hybrid composites, using more than one type of fiber have also been developed to combine, for example, the very high strength of carbon fibers with the damage tolerance of Kevlar. There is also a material known as reinforced carbon-carbon (or RCC), in which the matrix is also carbonized by a very lengthy and costly curing process. Heat shields and brake disks are the main current application for this material.

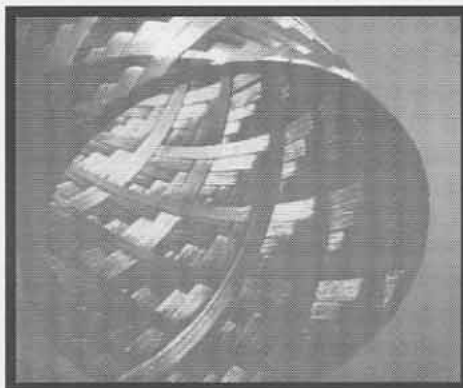


Fig. 4 Thermoplastic resin carbon fibre composite tube.

In an attempt to replace polymer resin matrices, metal-matrix and ceramic-matrix composites are being developed. As their name implies, these use either modern ceramics or metals as their matrix. This makes them much stronger, not being limited by a low-strength resin, and much more heat resistant.

We have reached a point where we no longer need to design structures to a material's limits, we can now tailor materials to our structural needs. This is particularly true of composites, but is also accomplished with metals. Materials are not what would complicate construction of a mecha, they actually make it that much simpler. Pallabors use composite skins around a steel and titanium skeleton. Gundams use a titanium alloy as armor; for Battlemechs it's ceramics. Also ceramic piston engines, turbines and rockets are practically a fact today. Watch out, because, with what we can build today, mecha might be just around the corner.

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MEKTON: CLOSER TO JAPANIMATION

by Marc-Alex Vézina

The long wait for the Mekton Technical System (MTS) is finally over. After months of gruesome testing, this new sourcebook will finally enable you to truly represent almost any tech system of the Japanimation world.

While this is very nice, it also cause a bit of trouble concerning those of us using the alternate rules published in Mecha-Press #2 and 3. Let's take a look and see what we can salvage...

TECH • SCALE FACTORS

The need for these two elements seem to have been important enough for R. Talsorian to begin the sourcebook with them. The difference in technology is represented by a process called "efficiency", which allow a 20-tons suit to be as destructive as a 300-tons fortress; the scale difference is taken care of by a process similar to my own, only more developed. For these reasons, the tech & scale factors are considered obsolete and won't be used anymore.

POWERPLANT

The complex powerplant system was designed when my players complained that all our mecha had the supercharged (+2) powerplant as standard (and therefore moved at the same speed) because of its low cost. We also discovered during play that the number of actions of a suit was directly linked to its chance of survival. Because of this, any mech that had not purchased the supercharged powerplant was at a distinct disadvantage (a.k.a. a largely increased chance of death).

The resulting alternate system worked great but any increase in speed and/or agility demanded a great number of CPs, not to mention a lengthy chat with a pocket calculator. After discussing it with many Mekton players outside my group, I decided to use a new simplified method which is still better than the original Mekton II system and also take into account the MTS improvement (fragile powerplant).

The powerplant chart works much the same way as the original from Mekton II. Check the weight of the mecha after weight efficiency is used and note down the cost and level of powerplant needed. Then spend as many CPs as you want to upgrade it. Of course, since the cost doubles each time, you won't be able to go far... This high cost is used to prevent the "supercharging" phenomenon that was so annoying, while still leaving some room for variations. Refer to the MA & MV chart for the other engine stats.

Unlike Mekton II, upgrading an engine doesn't give you extra actions. Extra actions give an immense advantage over those who do not have them, and should be obtained only through special systems like thought control or V-Max powerbooster (making them truly devastating, like they should be). However, to balance this and the new MV chart, I have included an updated Action chart.

POWERPLANT CHART

| Tons | Type | Cost&Kills | Upgrade cost |
|---------|---------------|------------|--------------|
| 1-19 | Superlight | 2 | 2 |
| 20-29 | Lightweight | 4 | 2 |
| 30-39 | Striker | 6 | 2 |
| 40-49 | Med. Striker | 8 | 2 |
| 50-59 | Heavy Striker | 10 | 3 |
| 60-69 | Med. Weight | 12 | 3 |
| 70-79 | Light Heavy | 14 | 4 |
| 80-89 | Med. Heavy | 16 | 4 |
| 90-99 | Arm. Heavy | 18 | 5 |
| 100-109 | Super Heavy | 20 | 6 |
| 110+ | Mega Heavy | 22 | 8 |

Upgrade cost doubles for each upgrade level after the first (ie 1x, 2x, 4x, 8x, etc), non cumulative;

Each upgrade level gives +1 MV (max MV 0), +2 MA and +2 Kills;

Fragile powerplants cost half the final price but have only 1 Kill.

ACTION CHART

| Man reflex | Mecha reflex | No. Action(s) |
|------------|--------------|---------------|
| 2 to 4 | -11 to -5 | 1 |
| 5 to 7 | -4 to 1 | 2 |
| 8 to 10 | 2 to 7 | 3 |
| 11+ | 8+ | 4 |

FLIGHT SYSTEMS

The reason why I changed the flight system table was one of simple physics. We all know that for a given force a small mass will gain more acceleration than a large mass; but in Mekton II three extra points of thruster will add 1 point of MA, regardless of the actual weight of the machine. In the new table, small suits need less lift points to stay in the air and move than big ones (this is also a side bonus of reducing the weight of the mecha with the efficiency process). I've also included the gravitic flight system for those who wish to use it.



One small side note is the new MA bonus for fighter and astrofighter. All players I talked to agreed that they are much too slow compared to actual planes, hence the new bonus. Calculate the flight speed normally, adding any bonus for wings or form (see MTS), then simply double it. While this will probably allow any fighter to zip through the battlefield, it does make sense (after all the speed of sound, Mach 1, is 1225.4 Kph or 68 MA).

FLIGHT SYSTEMS CHART

| Tons | Pts. Lift needed | Extra pts. to gain 1 MA |
|---------|------------------|-------------------------|
| 1-19 | 3 | 1 |
| 20-29 | 3 | 1 |
| 30-39 | 6 | 1 |
| 40-49 | 6 | 2 |
| 50-59 | 9 | 2 |
| 60-69 | 9 | 2 |
| 70-79 | 12 | 3 |
| 80-89 | 12 | 3 |
| 90-99 | 15 | 4 |
| 100-109 | 18 | 5 |
| 110+ | 24 | 6 |

Fans cost 1 CP per 2 points of lift. Base MA: 8
 Thrusters cost 1 CP per point of lift. Base MA: 12
 Gravitics cost 2 CPs per point of lift. Base MA: 14
 Three points of lift fit in one space.
 Wings add +2 MA
 Fighter and astrofighter double the calculated flight MA

- The charts are used only if some damage gets past the armor;
- The number of Kills added to the die roll is the number of Kills before armor or shield (but not force defence) are taken into account;
- When moving up or down the tables because of weight, points should be added or subtracted from the die roll.
- SD are the Kills that got past the armor (ie the normal damage you usually subtract).

MEKTON 3.0

The three dimensional rules were greatly appreciated by players. It does add a highly visual aspect to a game, as well as providing us with a nifty reason for playing around with little robots! The MTS fits right in with these rules and there are no modifications to be made. However, you may want to make some new templates for wide-angle weaponry, and maps of the playing area for secretly moving cloaked mecha.

In next issue: a scenario for Mekton!

FUEL

Some readers complained that the fuel rules were a bit obscure so here are some clarifications:

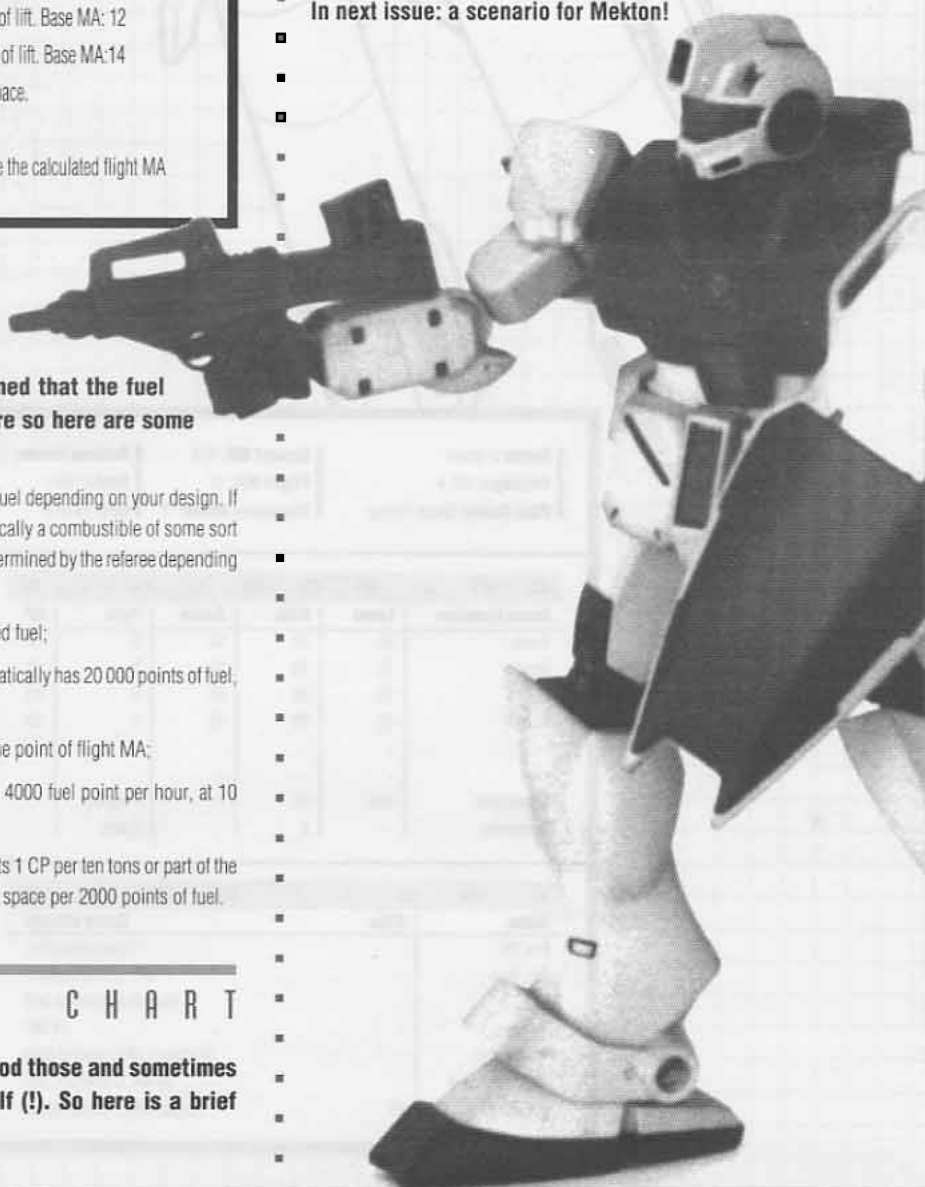
- Fans may or may not need fuel depending on your design. If they do, the fuel is automatically a combustible of some sort and can explode (effects determined by the referee depending on the design);
- Gravitic systems do not need fuel;
- Each jet flight system automatically has 20 000 points of fuel, at no space cost;
- Each point of fuel equals one point of flight MA;
- Average fuel expenditure is 4000 fuel point per hour, at 10 MA;
- Extra fuel (1000 points) costs 1 CP per ten tons or part of the mecha's weight and takes 1 space per 2000 points of fuel.

DAMAGE CHART

Ouch. Nobody understood those and sometimes I'm not sure I do myself (!). So here is a brief explanation:

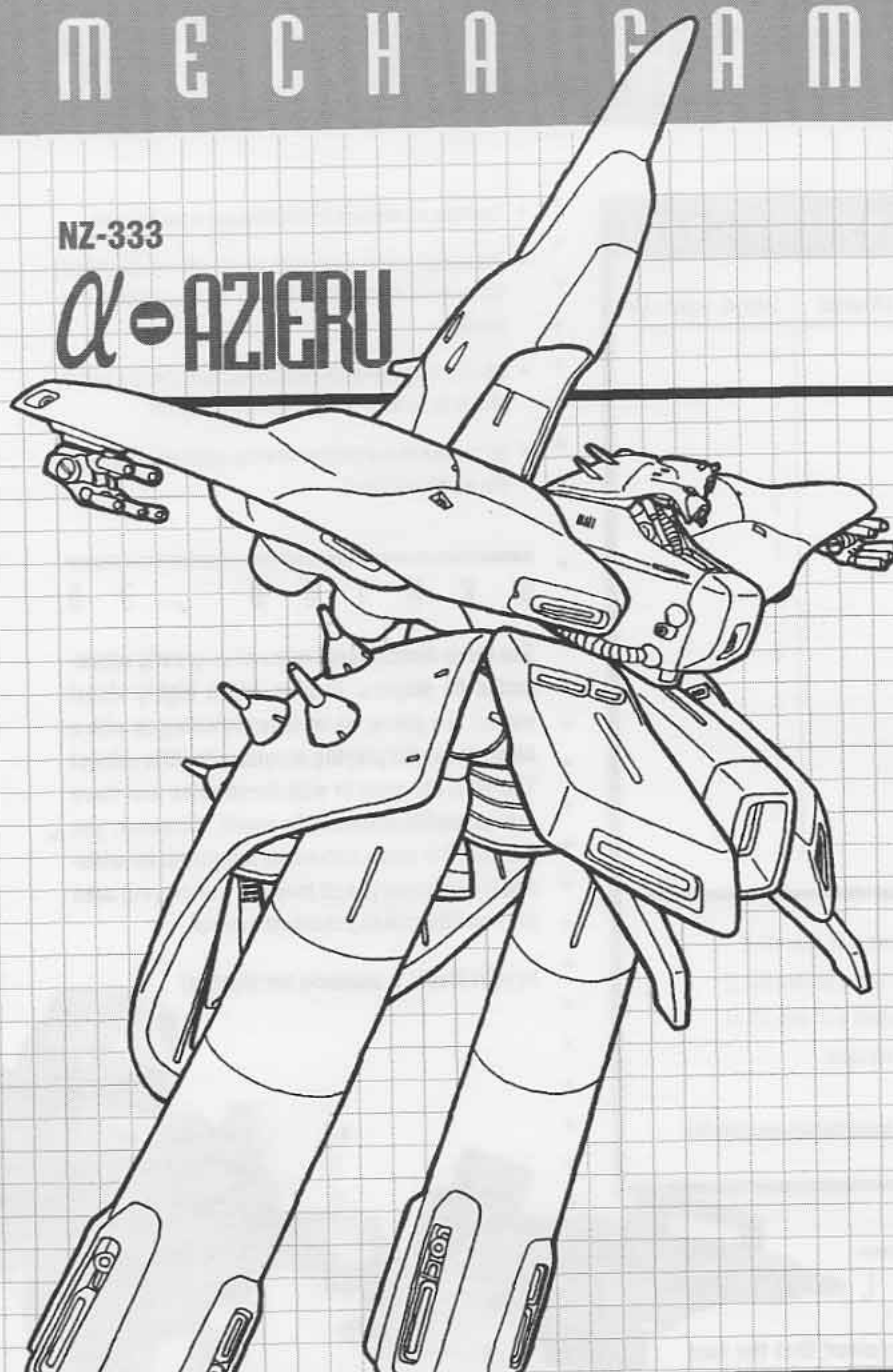
BASE MA • MV CHART

| Tons | MA | MV |
|---------|----|-----|
| 1-19 | 8 | -3 |
| 20-29 | 7 | -4 |
| 30-39 | 6 | -5 |
| 40-49 | 6 | -6 |
| 50-59 | 5 | -7 |
| 60-69 | 5 | -8 |
| 70-79 | 4 | -9 |
| 80-89 | 4 | -10 |
| 90-99 | 3 | -11 |
| 100-109 | 3 | -12 |
| 110+ | 2 | -13 |



NZ-333

α-AZIERU



MECHA DESIGNS ADAPTATION FOR MEKTON

by Marc-Alex Vézina

The α-Azieru is the biggest mobile armor ever constructed in the Gundam saga. It dwarfs even the PsychoGundams (Mk I and II) and the massive Quin-Manta. When the Mekton Tech Manual presented a scaling system, I just couldn't resist! The α-Azieru is built using the updated Mekton rules found in this issue and the new rules of the MTS. I chose to build it at scale 10x, to truly represent its awesome power and size.

The weapon layout is fairly basic. The main gun is a powerful beam cannon, termed "psycommu" because it is focused through the thought control system. The same goes for the backup scatter guns in the arms. Even if they are not used in the movie, I placed the four small autocannons in the head.

The scariest weapon of the α-Azieru are its nine remote-controlled beam cannons, or bits. Thought-directed by the pilot, they can slice an enemy mecha in half in no time.

Strong armor and servos make this MA one tough cookie. Use it to scare the players into submission, or as a grand finale.

Name: α-Azieru
Tonnage: 267.4
Pilot Name: Ques Paraya

Ground MA: N/A
Flight MA: 12
Maneuver Value: -2

Actions Bonus: +1
Scale: 10/1
CPs: 9418.6

COMPONENTS

| Servo Location | Level | Kills | Armor | Type | SP |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|----|
| Torso | SL | 20 | SL | S | 10 |
| Head | SL | 10 | SL | S | 10 |
| L. Arm | SL | 20 | SL | S | 10 |
| R. Arm | SL | 20 | SL | S | 10 |
| - | - | - | - | - | - |
| - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Powerplant | MH | 10 | - | Fragile+1 | - |
| Hydraulics | - | 6 | - | Space | - |

EQUIPMENT

| Name | Kills | Game effects |
|----------------|-------|-------------------------------|
| Env. Pr. | - | Space protection |
| Esc. Pod | - | MB; can be useful... |
| Link | - | Head Autocannons (all) |
| Verniers | - | +8 MV |
| Th. Control | - | 3K dam=1 hit to head of pilot |
| 2XBooster pack | - | 30 MA, 5 MA/turn, MB |
| Thrusters | 24 | 1 space MB, 1 space Binder |

WEAPONS

| Name | WA | Range | Kills/Dam | Shots | Loc | Special |
|----------------------|----|-------|-----------|-------|-------|------------------------|
| Psycommu Beam Cannon | +2 | 12 | 20/20 | Inf. | Head | 3 turn warm-up, 60 deg |
| Psycommu Scatter Gun | +3 | 8 | 10/10 | inf. | L.Arm | BV5, AM(var) |
| Psycommu Scatter Gun | +3 | 8 | 10/10 | inf. | R.Arm | BV5, AM(var) |
| 4XHead Guns | +2 | 3 | 1/1 | 10 | Head | Mach. fire BV3 |
| Binder | - | - | 0/10 | - | MB | SD. Armor |
| L.Hand | +2 | Melee | 10/10 | - | L.Arm | Quick, Handy |
| R.Hand | +2 | Melee | 10/10 | - | R.Arm | Quick, Handy |

SENSORS

| Type | Kills | Range | Comm | Loc |
|------|-------|-------|---------|------|
| LW | 3 | 20 Km | 5000 Km | Head |
| SL | 5 | 10 Km | 3000 Km | MB |

REMOTE UNITS

| Ground MA: N/A | Servos | | Weapons | Equipment | |
|----------------|-----------|------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| Flight MA: 15 | Main Body | Powerplant | Beam cannon | Th. Control | Thrusters |
| MV: 0 | LW | SL | +2WA | - | MB |
| Q: 8 | 4K | Fragile+1 | 4K | - | - |
| CR:15 | SP:0 | - | Range 6 | - | - |
| OR:45 | - | - | shots inf. | - | - |

MECHA DESIGNS
ADAPTATION
FOR MECHA!®

by Marc-Alex Vézina

I was browsing through the Mecha! rulebook, searching for an idea for my next mecha adaptation when the thought occurred to me: Mecha! can accommodate surface vehicle as well as airplane! So I decided to translate the big Ishtar battle tank from Venus War, the Admiral A-1 Tako.

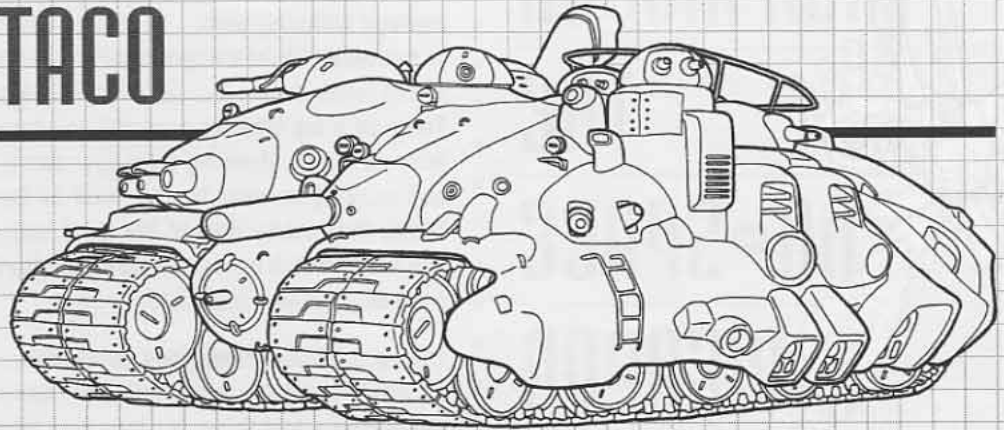
The Tako uses the rules published in issue #4. If you do not have it, it is a simple matter to redesign the tank to conform to the regular rules.

As you can see, this little (!) nasty is well-armored and well-armed. Three crewmen means a least three chances to shoot in a round, making the Tako extremely deadly. A good selection of long, medium and short range guns gives you great versatility. Of course, to pay for all this some speed and agility had to be sacrificed.

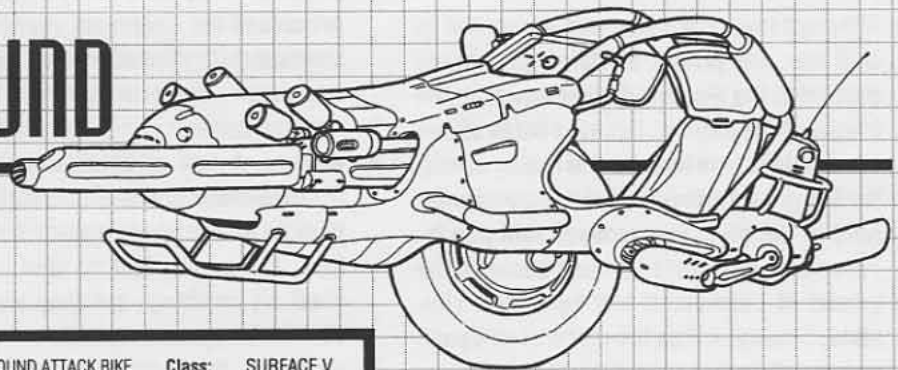
While I was at it, I designed the battlebikes. I used the powersuit rules, but when *Combat!* is released you may want to redo them. The Hound is a class 5 surface powersuit, with little armor and SI but a big gun, four missiles, great speed and an attitude. Use them in packs to wear down the armor of the enemy, then chop it to pieces with the railgun.


These vehicles are not shown to scale.




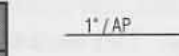



ADMIRAL-A1
TACO



ATC-02
HOUND



| | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|-------------------------|--|
| Name: HOUND ATTACK BIKE | | Class: SURFACE V | |
| | | Point Value: 125 | |
| Rail gun Damage: | 106 | Distance Limits: | 29 |
| ROF: | 5 | AP Ratio: | 7"/AP |
| Weapons in Batt.: | 1 | BoosterJets | N |
| Turret: | N | Missiles: |  |
| Armor: | 1 | Smoke Pods: | N |
| St: | 10 | Ranged Bonus | +1 |

| VEHICLE NAME: ADMIRAL A-1 TAKO | | | | Class: HEAVY Point Value: 500 | | AMMUNITION RECORD SHEET | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|--|-------|---|--------------|--|-------|---|--------------|----|---------|---|----|---|---|----|---------|---|----|---|---|----|----------|-----|----|---|---|----|---------|-----|----|---|---|----|--------------|---|-------|---|---|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| System Integrity:  | | Regular Armor:  | | Hum Sur Aero | | AP ratio | | Booster Unit: N | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Force Screen: N | | Shield: N | | Gr:  | | 1* / AP | | HEAVY MISSILES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Force Shield: N | | Number of crew: 3 | | Sk:  | | - | | Bay 1 - Bay 2 - Bay 3 - Bay 4 - Bay 5 - Bay 6 - | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FI:  | | - | | - | | - | | Bay 1 - Bay 2 - Bay 3 - Bay 4 - Bay 5 - Bay 6 - | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WEAPONS / BATTERIES: | | | | MISSILES: # of missiles | | Hull Configuration: Surface Vehicle | | Bazooka: N  | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Description</th> <th>Damage</th> <th>Range</th> <th>ROF</th> <th># in Battery</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>W1</td> <td>Phalanx</td> <td>-</td> <td>10</td> <td>6</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W2</td> <td>Phalanx</td> <td>-</td> <td>10</td> <td>6</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W3</td> <td>Main Gun</td> <td>4D6</td> <td>40</td> <td>1</td> <td>-</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W4</td> <td>Mortars</td> <td>2D6</td> <td>20</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>W5</td> <td>Gr. Launcher</td> <td>-</td> <td>Spec.</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | | | | | Description | Damage | Range | ROF | # in Battery | W1 | Phalanx | - | 10 | 6 | - | W2 | Phalanx | - | 10 | 6 | - | W3 | Main Gun | 4D6 | 40 | 1 | - | W4 | Mortars | 2D6 | 20 | 1 | 3 | W5 | Gr. Launcher | - | Spec. | - | - | Bay 1 - Bay 2 - Bay 3 - Bay 4 - Bay 5 - Bay 6 # of pods | | Other Abilities Aux. Controls (2) | | Grenades: Y  | |
| | Description | Damage | Range | ROF | # in Battery | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W1 | Phalanx | - | 10 | 6 | - | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W2 | Phalanx | - | 10 | 6 | - | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W3 | Main Gun | 4D6 | 40 | 1 | - | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W4 | Mortars | 2D6 | 20 | 1 | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| W5 | Gr. Launcher | - | Spec. | - | - | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hand Weapon: N | | | | Hand-to-Hand Options: | | # of smoke pods 1 | | EMP MISSILES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Energy Weapon: N | | | | C | | - | | Bay a - Bay b - Bay c - Bay d - Bay e - Bay f - | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| - | | | | - | | - | | # of Pods: - | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

YACA MECHA THE NO-SPACE WEAPON

A Spirit Warrior scenario for Mecha!™

By Dave Georgeson

Although their city-state was embroiled in civil war, the priests of Tlaloc gave much thought to the Shadow Walker threat on the fringes of the empire. Because these aliens seem able to fade in and out of reality at will, the Storm Riders theorized they existed naturally in the no-space between fold points. They knew this could be done because the priests of Yacatecutli had built their city-state, Ixcuina, within the realm of no-space and maintained it there for years.

But, if they were right, the Spirit Warrior Empire faced a dire problem indeed: the Aztec mind-set does not easily embrace the idea of a defensive war and there was simply no way to create an offensive against enemies that could disappear from battle at will.

That was when the priests of Tlaloc secretly began preparing one of their small island bases to house a weapon capable of attacking no-space enemies. They selected a small island on the fringes of the Boiling Sea and prayed to their god for the defense platform they would need. Clouds gathered, a down-pour began, and lightning filled the skies. The priests endured, knowing the storm to be the blessing of their god for recent successes. They watched silently as hordes of Caretakers descended from the clouds to begin construction of a huge gun reaching toward the skies. The construction was finished before the storm broke and when the sun shone again on the tiny island, the gun tower pointed up at the sky like a menacing finger of death.

The priests began work in earnest then. Connecting themselves to the gun in their ayuiayo (infinity) suits, the Storm Riders communed with the everpresent Flayed Ones to use those insane priests' conduit to Xipe Totec as a tap into the powerful mind patterns of a god. Drawing upon that energy, and working as near to one mind as they could, they subtly altered the mind waves into a form which bore more resemblance to a space rip than a mere energy bolt.

Their groundwork completed, they prepared for days, mentally and physically, before attempting a test firing. No less than thirty priests gathered in the dank room hollowed from the heart of the island. Once fully prepared, they sank into a deep trance and processed the enormous energies through their carefully attuned minds. The effort was enormous — two priests died of brain damage and another went totally insane — but it worked. A bolt of blackness ripped away from the tower to disappear into the reds and purples of a space fold some half-mile distant. The priests had no idea whether the blast hit anything, but they were jubilant that the bolt penetrated into no-space, and, excitedly, they began discussing ideas on how to refine the technique for future use.

Unfortunately for the Storm Rider priests, their test bolt passed through an area of no-space near Ixcuina, the city-state of Yacatecutli. No one was hurt, but the Way Bringer priests were psychically deafened for hours after the gun was fired. Panic ate at the minds of the priests as they realized their "invulnerable" city-state was now suddenly vulnerable to an unknown enemy. Imagining this to be some new sort of Shadow Walker attack, they cast after its source with their minds. They were shocked to find the attack had come from Tamoachan! A war council was immediately held and it was decreed that any weapon capable of firing through no-space should only be held by the Way Bringers of Ixcuina. They had two reasons for this: first, they had long ago established a claim on all fold space knowledge, and second, in the midst of a civil war, they could not allow other, potentially unfriendly, city-states to control a weapon which could harm Ixcuina.

A battle was in the making.

SCENARIO DESCRIPTION

This scenario is designed so it may be played as a stand-alone game, but it may easily be incorporated into a Spirit Warrior Empire storyline campaign as either a Garrison or Search and Destroy mission (depending upon which city-state the "active" player is playing).

The no-space weapon is contained within a tower reaching up toward the sky. This tower sits on a small, rocky atoll near the fringes of the Boiling Sea of Tamoachan. The Yacatecutli forces have sent a full-strength war party to seek and destroy the weapon that threatens their city-state of Ixcuina. The Storm Riders, on the other hand, have recently sent a war party to the tower in case their bolt into no-space attracts some unwelcome Shadow Walker attention. Neither side really expects the resistance it will receive, but neither one is willing to back off either. This battle takes place above and below the waters around the no-space tower.

OBJECTIVES

Storm Riders: The Tlaloc forces must drive off the Way Bringers without loss of the no-space weapon.

Way Bringers: Yacatecutli's forces must destroy the tower in one of two ways: Either penetrate the powerful force screen surrounding the tower, or break through the underwater door below the surface of the sea and sabotage the Heart of Jade within. (See Special Rules.)

VICTORY AWARDS

In addition to the normal victory awards for kills, captures, and salvages, the following awards are also awarded.

Storm Riders: If the enemy is repulsed and the tower has taken less than four critical hits, add 3 victory points to their total.

Way Bringers: If the tower is destroyed and Yacatecutli's side still has at least 1000 points of mecha still remaining in the war party, add 5 victory points.

These additional victory point awards are ignored if this scenario is played as part of a storyline campaign.

TERRAIN

The entire table is a shallow sea covering the first flight band of a battlepole. Therefore, any mech at FB-1 is considered underwater. The tabletop is the sea floor and can be walked on. There should be at least two islands, with one of the islands holding the no-space tower. The no-space tower extends to FB-5 and has several platforms that allow mecha

to battle from (and on) different levels of the tower. In addition, underwater grottoes of seaweed, kelp, and coral help to make the underwater battles more interesting.

BEGINNING FORCES AND SET-UP

Each side begins the game with a full 2,000 point war party. (For ease of play, use the war parties detailed in *Spirit Warrior Empire*.) The Way Bringers of Yacatecutli will be the attacking force and begin the game with control of the first phase sequence. If your game table is longer than it is wide, have the Way Bringers come in from a long end and have the no-space tower, and corresponding island, about 18" from the other end. The Storm Bringers of Tlaloc may set up *anywhere* on that half of the table—but remember that they automatically lose control of the first phase sequence, so set up accordingly.

SPECIAL SCENARIO RULES

1 • The tower is protected by a force screen that absorbs five criticals per phase sequence. It is powered by the Heart of Jade within the base and will replenish its field at the end of each phase sequence. The tower itself can take five additional criticals before it is destroyed. The tower is Substantial, Indestructible and only criticals on a 6.

2 • The door below the sea should be marked on the side of the island before play begins. To add spice to the game, the door should be on the side of the island facing the side the Way Bringers come in from. This underwater door is not protected by a force screen, but can sustain 7 criticals before it is destroyed. The door is Substantial, Indestructible. Once the door is blown open, the Heart of Jade within must take a single critical to be destroyed. The Heart of Jade takes criticals on a 4 or better. When it does take a critical, it will explode in a 6d6, 6" radius blast. (However, pay attention to underwater rules.)

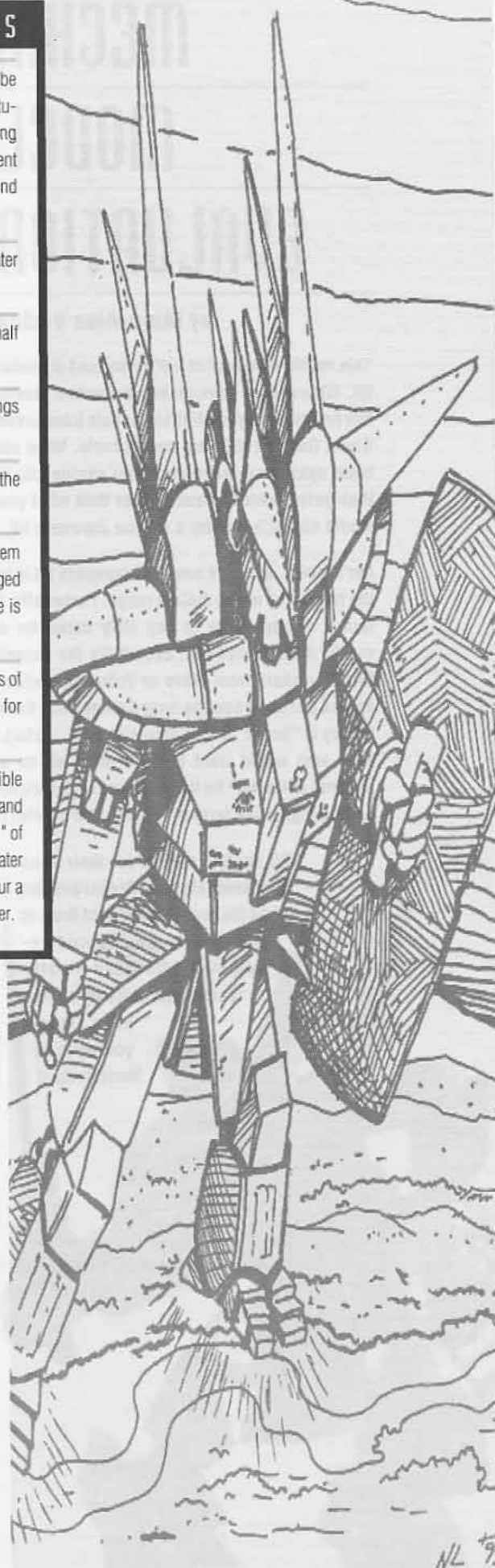
3 • The rule about defending terrain targets from missile attacks can be crucial to the success of this scenario. It is on pg. 8 of *Spirit Warrior Empire*.

UNDERWATER RULES

- 1** • All mecha and powersuits are assumed to be specially outfitted for underwater combat. Unfortunately, no one ever found a way to make skimming work underwater. Therefore, the only movement methods available beneath the surface are ground movement and flight.
- 2** • All movement costs are doubled due to water resistance.
- 3** • Ranged weapons are one-half range and one-half damage.
- 4** • Hand weapons are -1d6 damage because swings are slowed by the water.
- 5** • Missile guidance systems are confused by the water and all missiles are -3 to hit.
- 6** • It also slows down the missiles, making them easier to hit with ranged attacks. All defensive ranged attacks gain a +1 to determine whether a missile is destroyed or not. (Destroyed on a 4-6.)
- 7** • The water also enhances the concussive effects of the missiles. Add +2 to each damage die roll for purposes of damage and critical hit checks.
- 8** • The water's surface is Obscuring, Indestructible terrain. Firing from in the water to out of the water (and visa versa) incurs the standard -1 to hit for every 1" of interposing water. However, attackers within the water firing at targets also within the water will only incur a penalty of -1 to hit for every 5" of interposing water.

CONSTRUCTING TERRAIN

Islands can be constructed from layers of styrofoam cut to shape with a hot knife or flexible saw and then covered with plaster-soaked paper to give a rock-like appearance. (Make sure to keep the plaster consistency thin for ease of application.) The tower can be made by combining various diameters of cardboard tubing and using bits from plastic models and other odds and ends to give it an interesting sci-fi feel. Of course, seaweed, kelp, and coral are easy if you're willing to part with a small amount of cash. Just go down to a local pet store and pick up some realistic looking aquarium plants. Cut these apart and glue them to wood bases and you can arrange them in amazingly life-like grottoes. If you spend some time painting your terrain up, you'll quickly have quality islands and sea terrain that can double as steep hills, mountain plateaus, and alien vegetation in other games.



MECHA! MODEL EVALUATION

by Marc-Alex Vézina

This month we examine a different sort of model kit. Whereas we have mainly discussed plastic kits before, the Spirit Warrior models from Seven Street Games (SSG) are cast in resin. What set them apart from the mainstream garage kits is their price, which is quite lower than what you would expect to pay for a similar Japanese kit.

Let's face it, even the smallest Japanese kit is in the twenty (or more) dollars range. Personally, I find it disappointing to pay sixty bucks for a mecha three inches tall, even if it's the superb Watchamakalit from Wave or Volks. This widespread phenomenon has turned many away from the joy of "exotic" material (resin, vinyl, metal). Hey, who would want to do a poor job on a hundred dollar kit? (Is it just me or are the prices getting higher the farther I go into this article?)

SSG needed models for their three-dimensional game Mecha! and they had the great idea to cast them in resin. The long announced production kits have finally reached our office for evaluation. Feast your eyes on these birdies!

OVERVIEW

The kits come packaged on a bed of foam in a very nice transparent box (save the box, it's great to store small models or parts!). A wraparound sheet of glossy paper identifies the model and presents hints plus a schema to help build the model.

SSG has decided to use a modular system so that modelers can build the mecha of their dream with parts from many kits. The five models I reviewed share a lot more than you might expect, but still somehow remain different.

The shapes are rather blocky and angular, but the kits correspond well to the drawings in the Spirit Warrior sourcebook (with a few exceptions, see below). The flat surfaces are easy to sand, a plus for the first-time resin modeler. However, experienced builders will find the simple forms and lack of detail a bit disappointing.

A big problem with all five reviewed models is the quality of the molding. There is flash on all the parts, as well as sink holes and lots of small air bubbles. Some surfaces are uneven and can present problems when assembling the model. While easily fixed, all this can frighten inexperienced modelers. On the bright side, the resin is not too brittle and is easy to work with.

HUMMINGBIRD [KIT 101]

MATERIAL: RESIN
PROTOTYPE MODELER: THOMAS FOSS
SCALE: 15MM (ABOUT 1/100)



According to the Spirit Warrior sourcebook, the Hummingbird is a light mech, agile and ferocious: it certainly looks the part. Curiously, the model doesn't have any arms or shield, even if they are present in the sourcebook. SSG told me that the sourcebook will be amended, and the model is the correct shape for the Hummingbird.

The model stands about two inches high and is quite unstable. This is due to the shape of the legs, which places the center of gravity too far ahead of the feet. To correct this you will have to glue the wings and the main body behind

their intended position (see picture); you may have to add a small scrap of plastic between the torso pieces to help in this task. I glued the model to a base to permanently solve the problem.

BLOODED SPARROW [KIT 102]

MATERIAL: RESIN
PROTOTYPE MODELER: THOMAS FOSS
SCALE: 15MM (ABOUT 1/100)



The Sparrow is different from the other mecha in the series because it is an aerospace fighter. It can still use (or be used as) spare parts like the rest of the SSG model, however.

I had no major problem cleaning and assembling the craft because it is even simpler than the rest. The wings gave me the most troubles, but that's because I misread the instruction scheme and glued them on the wrong spot! Be sure to glue them UNDER the box on either side of the fuselage, not on the box like I did. I added the missile canisters under the wings using parts from my spares box.

Painting was a breeze. The bird-like shape screams for a colorful feather job, and that's what I did.

SCREECH OWL [KIT 103]

MATERIAL: RESIN
PROTOTYPE MODELER: THOMAS FOSS
SCALE: 15MM (ABOUT 1/100)



The Screech Owl is a lot bigger, sharing the main body of the Super-Heavy-Class Feast of Flags. It also has the same

"feather" ornament on its shoulders, as well as the same forearm and hand. The shield is also standard issue, with an Aztec style skull motif on top.

I couldn't fit either the legs or the arms properly. The guys at SSG showed me how to do it using epoxy glue to fill the gap, but I preferred to make some joints with plastic tubing. This also has the nice side effects of enlarging your model (making it look meaner!) and helping to create an attractive stance. I glued the legs on first, then checked the fit of the arms and shoulder wings. The arms were painted separately, but the wings were attached and puttied before painting.

Again, the mecha was glued to a base to prevent it from toppling over, even if it's fairly stable.

HAWK WITH TALON [KIT 104]

MATERIAL: RESIN
PROTOTYPE MODELER: THOMAS FOSS
SCALE: 15MM (ABOUT 1/100)



When I first opened the box, I thought the Hawk was just a variant of the Screech Owl. Boy was I wrong! The head unit is different, and the legs are simply not the same. Instead of having a combo club/missile bay in the right arm, the Hawk has the classic arm/hand unit, with a hand-held *maquahuitl* club.

I had the same problem with the fit of the legs and arms as on the Owl and the Feast of Flags. Again the plastic joints solution was used. In fact, both the Hawk and the Owl are built much in the same way; building one helps understanding the process, so it's easier the second time around. Be careful however as the mouth of the Hawk has a much tighter fit than the one on its counterpart.

FEAST OF FLAGS [KIT 105]

MATERIAL: RESIN
PROTOTYPE MODELER: THOMAS FOSS
SCALE: 15MM (ABOUT 1/100)



The Feast of Flags is a super-heavy mecha and it shows. The model is larger than the others in the series, even if many of the parts used in its construction are standard issue.

The fit proved to be no real problem, although I had to file the bottom of the feet so the mecha would stand on its own in a natural way. The arms were a major exception: a plastic "shoulder" had to be built to accommodate them. You'll also have to provide a length of wire to represent the sun spear's barrel.

Painting was no major hassle. The arms and shoulder feathers were painted separately, as were the mouth gun and the mouth itself. Final assembly was a breeze.

CONCLUSION

While these models are far from being perfect, they are an excellent start for SSG. They make a perfect introduction to alternative material modeling, and they add something different to your collection.

When I met the SSG peoples at GenCon 92 this summer, I talked to them about the kits and they showed me some of their newest prototypes.

They were already better, and I do believe their models are worth checking out.



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AN INTRODUCTION TO GARAGE KITS

by Marc-Alex Vézina

We, as modelers and consultants, have often heard the fears of fans who would like to buy garage kits but are rather scared of them because of their price and/or materials. We do prefer plastic ourselves (Martin has over two thousand dollars worth of plastic kits, so...) but garage kits are also quite popular in our workshop.

OVERVIEW

The first one Martin bought was a resin Wave 1/144 scale Knight of Gold. It proved one thing to us: for high precision molding, plastic cannot beat resin! The precision of resin casting is unbelievable. Each nut and bolt, each crevice (even scratches on the matrix part) no matter how small it is will appear and be reproduced with extreme detail. And the posture is generally quite interesting, since the model's design doesn't have to accommodate movable articulations (look at the plastic models from Aura Battler Dunbine: talk about compromise!) or variable structure (transformable models). Soft vinyl offers the same advantage even if the molding isn't as crisp as with resin (which is really hard vinyl). In addition, since soft vinyl is cheaper and the parts are lighter (being hollow due to the molding process), it is suitable for big figures (1/12 to 1/1) or big mechas and monsters: Giant Robo, Godzilla and the like. Even if the precision of the parts is a bit lower, the overall look is often spectacular and extremely wild!

As far as complexity goes, resin and vinyl kits are less complicated than plastic models, although they do require some getting used to. The process of building a garage kit is not the same as building a plastic kit, and further vary if it's a soft vinyl or resin kit. Here's a short description of each:

SOFT VINYL

The first thing to do upon opening your kit is to check if there are any parts mishaped or missing. If so, now would be a good time to return it.

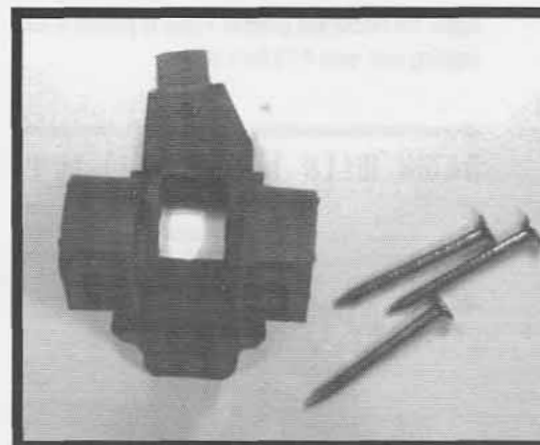
Vinyl parts, being thin and hollow, have a tendency to warp when taken out of the mold rapidly and/or carelessly. This is normal and easily corrected by immersing the part in hot (not boiling!) water to soften the material and allow it to return to the correct shape. You may have to manually shape the part and hold it in the correct position while it cools. Another alternative is to use a hairdryer to heat the part. This technique is useful when assembling the model to make sure that no water is trapped inside.



Once the parts are dry, start trimming them, using the instructions as reference. Use a sharp blade and be

careful: a good blade cuts hot vinyl like butter. When opening holes for the arms, legs and other parts, always leave a little excess. Test fit the part and trim a little more until it fits when heated a little.

Before finishing assembly, be sure to put some weights in the legs so your model will stand up by itself. Also check for surface defects: apply some putty and sand smooth using fine wet sandpaper. We use Tamiya putty and Squadron Green putty, and they work fine, so we recommend them. Normal putty might crack and fall off when applied to certain types of vinyl. Check on a scrap piece before starting.



Use cyanoacrylate (CA) glue to put the parts together. Some parts will be easier to glue if you insert them first (using the hairdryer) and then apply the glue to the outside. Or you could leave them unglued to have a posable (if fragile) model.

RESIN

Some resin kits are molded on sprue like plastic, but most of them will have free parts. In either case, check if you have all the parts upon opening the box to avoid unpleasant surprises later. Broken parts can be repaired, but check first if you could exchange the kit to save yourself some work.



The process of molding often leaves a raised line where the mold halves connected. The part may also have excess resin attached to it, so the first step is to remove these to

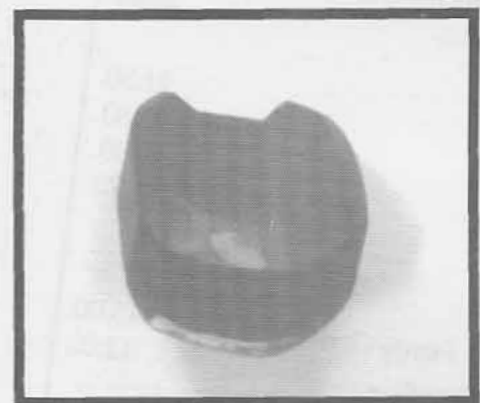


obtain a clean part. Refer extensively to the instruction sheet so you won't remove more than you should. Once this is done, reattach any chip that may have broken loose and fill up any surface defect with putty. You should now have a complete set of perfect parts, ready to be assembled. Resin can be glued either with CA glue or 5-minute epoxy glue, depending on the required strength and/or personal preference.

Depending on the model, you may have to strengthen the glue bond between big parts by inserting a metal pin between them. Lightly glue the parts together, then draw four evenly spaced dots around the joint. Break the joint and connect the dots so you'll have a "cross-hair" on each part to indicate the drilling point.

R E P A I R

Some people think that if you mess up a garage kit, it is ruined and you can kiss it goodbye. Nothing is further from the truth! When working with plastic, a serious mishap will ruin the part, requiring you to scratchbuild a



new one. That might be fine if the part in question is an armor skirt but not if it's the head or hand! This does not happen with resin or vinyl kits. Suppose your motor tool just slipped and made a big hole in the body of your Led Mirage. After being suitably upset for a few minutes, take some resin putty (like Milliput) and apply a blob to the damaged area (you may have to back up the hole with a sheet of plastic in the case of a vinyl kit). After working it more or less to shape, let it set, then with sandpaper, files, and X-acto knife do the final corrections. A good set of small jeweler files and an assortment of small grain sandpapers are very useful for this. If you do it correctly, none of the damage will show!

P A I N T I N G

Resin and vinyl kits can be painted with acrylic or enamel paints, although vinyl tends to react with the enamel solvent, producing a marred surface. Again, check on a scrap piece before starting. Acrylic paint is easier to use

anyway, as it is water-based. Several brands exist, the best known being Tamiya, Polly-S and Gunze-Sangyo (G-S offers all the weird "Gundam" colors in its anime line!). When assembly and painting are finished, a light coat of varnish will protect the model the same way as a plastic kit. The varnish should be matt for figures and matt or slightly glossy for monsters and mechas.

C O N C L U S I O N

Prices are a big concern, but they really shouldn't be. We think that a 1/144 scale Knight of Gold is plenty worth its 120\$ US! No plastic model can give that precision, that realism, that perfection. And at a fraction of the work required for a plastic model! If you have the money, you might consider a 120\$ of perfection rather than a 120\$ of plastic which will have to be banged on the wall to be made perfect (and even then)... So, while plastic bashing is part of the fun, why not try a garage kit? Who knows, you might grow to like them!



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1- How old are you?

- a) Less than 18
- b) Between 18 and 24
- c) Between 25 and 35
- d) Between 36 and 45
- e) Between 45 and 59
- f) Over 60

2- What is your sex?

- a) Male
- b) Female

3- What level of studies have you completed?

- a) High School
- b) College
- c) University
- d) Graduate studies
- e) Self-taught

4- What is your present occupation?

- a) Student
- b) Industry worker
- c) Office worker
- d) Service/sale worker
- e) Professional
- f) Military
- g) Self-employed
- h) Unemployed
- i) Other:

5- Where do you live? (State or province if in USA or Canada, Country if not).

6- Are you a subscriber?

- a) Yes
- b) No

7- Do you buy/read other magazines or fanzines on gaming, modeling or animation? If yes, name them:

8- What subject do you prefer? (You can circle more than one answer).

- a) Gaming
- b) Model Kits
- c) Japanese animation
- d) Animation in general
- e) Manga

9- Which games do you play? (You can circle more than one answer).

- a) Battletech
- b) Cyberpunk
- c) GURPS
- d) Mecha!™
- e) Mekton
- f) Rift
- g) Robotech
- h) Teenagers From Outer Space
- i) Others:

10- What else do you read? (You can circle more than one answer).

- a) Science Fiction novels
- b) Comic books
- c) General literature
- d) Scientific magazines
- e) Daily newspapers
- f) News magazines
- g) Others:

11- Would you be interested in contributing to the magazine (article, reviews, art)?

- a) Yes, (precise what kind of contribution)
- b) No

12- Are you satisfied by the cover art and the general look of the magazine?

- a) Yes
- b) No

13- Are you satisfied by the articles in the magazine?

- a) Yes
- b) No

14- What kind of coverage do you prefer for the magazine?

- a) One subject covered in depth
- b) Several subjects covered through smaller articles

15- What aspect is the most important for you?

- a) Modeling
- b) Gaming

16- Do you think there are enough illustrations inside the magazine?

- a) Yes
- b) No

17- Are you satisfied with the printing quality of the magazine?

- a) Yes
- b) No

18- Mecha-Press used to be 36 pages in a 9 1/4 x 12 format. The original idea was to have a BIG magazine for big mecha but it turned out to be an encombrant size for display and shipping. To correct that problem we will reduce its size to 8 1/4 x 10 3/4, raise the page count to 44 pages, and make 8 of those pages IN COLOR. Are you favorable to this change?

- a) Yes
- b) No

19- The price of the magazine originally was \$4.95 US/ \$5.50 Can. Higher production cost (raise in paper price, inflation, and of course those 8 color pages) leaves us no choice but to raise the price. Which price would you judge reasonable and be ready to pay?

- a) \$5.50 US/CAN
- b) \$5.95 US/CAN
- c) \$6.25 US/CAN
- d) \$6.50 US/CAN
- e) \$6.95 US/CAN

20- 70% of the Mecha-Press #4 copies contained a free poster of Dominion's Puma Sisters. Would you be interested to see more inserted posters in MP, even if it may occasionally raise the price of the magazine?

- a) Yes
- b) No

21- What can you suggest to improve the magazine?

22- What subjects can you suggest for future issues of Mecha-Press?

23- We will release one special issue each year. The first special issue will be on Spaceships. What are your suggestions for our future special issues?

24- Have you bought/read/seen any of our other products? If yes, which one? (You can circle more than one answer).

- a) Protoculture Addicts
- b) Anime Shower Special
- c) Cybersuit Arkadyne (comic by Tim Eldred)
- d) Gates of Pandragon (comic)
- e) Akira Poster-Zine
- f) Gamers' Herald (gaming journal)
- g) Night's Edge (Cyberpunk Sourcebook on Vampires)
- h) Necrology (Cyberpunk Adventure on Flatlining)
- i) Science Fiction books (5 titles — in French)
- j) Samizdat (Quebec SF fanzine — in French)

25- For how long have you known/read Mecha Press?

- a) Less than three months
- b) Between 3 and 6 months
- c) Between 6 months and a year
- d) Since issue #1
- e) Since the first issue #1 (big, red, duo-tone)

26- What kind of merchandizing products would you buy from Ianus Publications if they were produced? (You can circle more than one answer).

- a) T-Shirt
- b) Poster
- c) Sticker
- d) Best of the magazine articles
- e) Conversion kit for model
- f) Garage kit
- g) Resin Figurine
- h) Set of dice
- i) Reprint of old issues
- j) Our own Role-Playing Game
- k) Gaming adventure based on anime series
- l) Subtitled video (just kidding!)

For questions 27 to 30, vote by putting the letters corresponding to your choice from the list below:

- a) Editorial
- b) "This Month" (general presentation of the issue)
- c) Mailing column
- d) News: Animation
- e) News: Games
- f) News: Model kits
- g) Interview
- h) Report on convention
- i) Review: Anime & manga
- j) Review: Games
- k) Review: Model Kits
- l) Short comic story (1-3 pgs)
- m) Engineering Outlook
- n) Optional rules: Battletech
- o) Optional rules: Mecha!™
- p) Optional rules: Mekton
- q) Optional rules: Teenagers from Outer Space (TFOS)
- r) Mecha design adaptation: Battletech
- s) Mecha design adaptation: Mecha!™
- t) Mecha design adaptation: Mekton
- u) Anime: article
- v) Anime: synopsis
- w) Anime: character guide
- x) Anime: mecha design & specs
- y) Model kits: article
- z) Model kits: conversion tips

27- From the list above, which five subjects do/would you prefer the most in Mecha-Press?

28- Which five subjects do/would you like in second place?

29- Give five subjects that you don't mind seeing removed from the magazine:

30- Give five subjects that you really don't like in the magazine:



Thank you for answering this questionnaire and sending it back to us:

Ianus Publications,
MECHA-PRESS questionnaire,
2360 De LaSalle Avenue,
Montreal, Qc., Canada, H1V 2L1.

We will also welcome
any other comment from you.

SCI-FI ACTION-ADVENTURE ANIMATION FOR GROWN-UPS.

It's seldom that an animated film achieves the rank of instant classic. *Gall Force - Eternal Story* is one of those films.

Prior to *Gall Force*, American-style "hard science fiction" had never been successfully animated. After seeing *Terminator* for the first time, writer **Hideki Kakinuma** (well known for his design work on cult classic *Megazone 23* and the TV series *Mospeada*, basis of the American *Robotech*) vowed to create an equally powerful animated feature film. As a result of *Gall Force*'s success, the "hard" SF trend led to the creation of such best-sellers as *Appleseed*, *Dominion* and *Bubblegum Crisis*.

Most groundbreaking was *Gall Force*'s complex visual presentation, due to **Kakinuma's** collaboration with renowned manga artist **Kenichi Sonoda**. Beginning as the serialized photo-story "Star Front Gall Force" in *Model Grafix* magazine, their remarkable work captured the attention of then-fledgling animation studio Artmic, which created *Gall Force* as its first fully-realized feature production. The enduring appeal of *Gall Force* continues to hold in the Japanese animation world. Scriptwriter **Sukehiro Tomita** (*Macross*, *Mospeada*) is responsible for *Gall Force*'s sharp-edged plot and characterizations, while Director **Katsuhito Akiyama** infused the film with a gut-busting, tough action style greatly responsible for the incredible acclaim won by this story of an all-woman space warrior crew.

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As they battle their way to Chaos, the young women find themselves pawns in the plans of the high commands of BOTH sides. What they learn when they reach the new world will shake their loyalty to its very foundations. And the final decision they must make will not only affect the future of their race, but of a race which is yet to be! Evocative of an all-female *Magnificent Seven*, with overtones of *Star Wars* and *Alien*, *Gall Force* will take you on an adventure from which you'll never want to return. *Gall Force - Eternal Story* remains one of the most popular anime titles ever made, and **U.S. Manga Corps™** is proud to present it to the English-speaking world.

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